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THE Anglo-French conversations are over, and the Four Power Conference on the Danube plan is sitting as we write. Mr. MacDonald has not been nobbled by M. Tardieu, and those optimists in France, who thought that he was going to be, are now making the best of the visit by saying that it helped to produce a better understanding in London of the French aims. We daresay it did. We hope also that it helped the French to see the necessity of adapting their aims and their plans to the general interest. What the Four Power Conference will effect remains to be seen. Italy and Germany have both to be converted to the scheme of relief in any form in which it has yet been put forward, and the five Danubian States themselves are not agreed about anything except the necessity of assistance for the bankrupts. Loans to Austria and to Hungary seem to be imperative. But the City—and presumably the French bankers too—may want Government guarantees for these; everybody will want some international control and nobody is quite clear what shape it should take. As for the proposal of a tariff union with a 10 per cent. preference inside, this presents obvious objections both to the Danubian countries, or some of them, and to their customers outside. Switzerland and Poland as well as Germany and Italy are vitally concerned in this question. And Bulgaria and Greece, which are not included among the Danubian States, are as urgently in need of help as any of them, as the recently published report of the Financial Committee of the League of Nations has shown.

* * *

Side by side with the decision to ban the annual session of the Indian Congress come terrible reports of the "irregularities" now occurring in India under the rule of the Ordinances. Very few of these reports appear in the daily press in this country. The American public are more fully informed and the accounts given by visitors to India and by private letter from Indians and Englishmen in India form altogether a body of evidence which cannot be ignored. One practice bitterly complained of by English men and women who have seen it in operation is the use of a "cat-and-mouse" system. Political prisoners—often respectable persons of moderate views—are released on condition that they report at frequent intervals to the police. In many cases they are told to report within a few hours of their release. Conscious of no offence, they refuse to give their word, do not report and are then re-arrested and given long sentences, not as political prisoners but as ordinary criminals. Savage lathi beatings are reported daily and there are well-authenticated instances of prisoners being marched about in heavy chains. An inquiry might prove that some of the more shocking stories—we shall await with interest the inquiry into the alleged stripping and flogging of women reported by the *Daily Herald* correspondent in Bombay—are exaggerated, but exaggerations are as inevitable under a system of censorship as

"irregularities" and brutalities are certain under a system which leaves a whole population at the mercy of an irresponsible police.

* * *

We cannot believe that Mr. MacDonald, who has a long record of sympathy with Indian Nationalism, can willingly tolerate such a situation. If he is to retain any of his influence in India he must take a personal stand on this matter at once, if necessary in defiance of some of his colleagues. The Government's excuse is that it must repress the extremists while its scheme of Federation is being prepared for the acceptance of the moderates. But the process of repression is turning moderates into extremists every day. Congress, after all, represents the bulk of Indian Nationalist opinion, and if Mr. MacDonald does not wish to go down to history as the man who was the responsible head of the Government which made any agreed settlement impossible in India, he must conciliate opinion that is at present being outlawed.

* * *

Next Monday the Committee of Ministers appointed by the Assembly of the League will meet to take stock of the situation in China. The resolution that was passed at Geneva a month ago, calling upon the Japanese to make an end of their aggression, has had but little effect. Some of the Japanese forces have been evacuated, but the line of the Woosung railway is still strongly held, with the Chinese twenty kilometres away. Negotiations have dragged on without result; Japan will not withdraw except on terms which the Chinese will not accept, and which in all the circumstances it is impudent to ask them to accept. She is, in fact, defying the Assembly as she has defied the Council, though with rather less assurance owing to her bad and steadily worsening financial position. Manchuria, under its so-called independent government, is still a cockpit. The "bandits" are now dignified with the title of insurgents; the Japanese have found it necessary to reinforce their troops, and there has been fighting on a considerable scale at several points. Unless the League stands firm and insists on the complete liquidation of the Japanese adventure, in Manchuria as as well as at Shanghai, there will be no peace, but a very good chance of a war which will involve more than China and Japan, and the certainty of ruinous losses to everybody's trade. It is a calamity that in this critical situation Great Britain is represented by a man like Sir John Simon, who, instead of taking the lead in defence of the Covenant—and, we would add, of British interests in the Far East—seizes any occasion to lick the boots of the Japanese militarists.

* * *

The second and decisive ballot for the Presidency of the German Reich takes place on Sunday. The candidates are now reduced to three, Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, Herr Hitler and Herr Thälmann, the Communist. The Nationalist and the imprisoned currency crank have withdrawn. There is little doubt that Hindenburg will be elected, though the Hitlerites profess to be hopeful and are making a great deal of noise. Their defeat at this poll will not, of course, mean that they are done with. Their movement and their programme are symptoms of a formidable disease, and the only doctors able to cure this are outside Germany. If a sane policy can be agreed on at the Lausanne Conference in June, it will go far to save Germany—and Europe—from perdition. What the chances are of France coming to her senses, it is not easy to say. The French general election is now fixed for the beginning of May, and there are strong hopes of a big swing to the Left. The Die-hards of the Right are in full blast with patriotic slogans against Germany and disarmament and Socialism. But the real danger is not from them, but from the politicians of the Centre, from men like M. Tardieu who know how to do lip-service to internationalism without abating any of the claims of France to guns, gold and other instruments of national security.

* * *

We have heard a great deal in the last week or two about defects and hitches in the Five Year Plan. These stories are not this time all fairy tales from Riga. The columns of *Izvestia* and *Pravda*, and indeed the whole Soviet press, are full of denunciations and complaints of slackness, faulty work, and "bureaucratic" administration, in this or that enterprise. An official commission of inquiry has been to Nijni Novgorod to find out why the new Ford works are not turning out cars as they should be. In other concerns there have been admonitions, dismissals, arrests, and general overhaulings. But all this, while it shows that the Plan is not perfect (and who ever suggested it was?), is very far from portending its collapse. In the main it is making steady progress, and the attention which is being devoted to the weak spots is likely to act as a general stimulus. "Self-criticism"—which includes criticism of everybody else also—is a part of the Communists' way of life, and the ruthlessness with which it is conducted, strange though it may seem to more easy-going people and dangerous as it may be when pushed to extremes, is one of the factors in their success. And one of the less doubtful advantages of a dictatorship—at any rate of Stalin's dictatorship—is that it can nip abuses in the bud.

* * *

Last month's unemployment returns are considerably better, at least on paper, than the returns for February, and the total number recorded as out of work is now a little smaller than it was a year ago. But, owing to the operation of the "means test," this is probably not a true view of the position. Actually the number of persons out of work is probably greater than at this time last year, the fall in the total being the result of a reduction in the number of women registered as unemployed. This reduction is no doubt due in part to an improvement in the position of the textile trades; but it must be also the consequence of the wholesale disqualification of married women claimants to benefit. In London and in the South generally, there is more unemployment than there was, mainly because of decreased activity in the building and distributive trades. In comparison with other countries we have a good deal to be thankful for. But 2,500,000 unemployed constitute a problem which the Government ought to be attending to now that it can no longer plead an unbalanced budget and a threatened currency as reasons for doing nothing. In particular, the Govern-

ment ought to be using every effort to stimulate employment in the building trades and to reverse the disastrous movement of municipal "economy" which was instituted on the plea of the financial crisis.

* * *

A year ago there seemed to be real ground for hope that the Coal Mines Reorganisation Committee meant to take the task of colliery amalgamation seriously in hand. The Committee prepared and circulated to the mineowners a document which clearly contemplated the creation of a number of large regional combines, big enough to extend, at any rate by stages, over entire coalfields, and to make possible economical working of the industry from the standpoint of both production and marketing. Since then, the general public has heard but little of the Committee's doings; but behind the scenes a good many of the owners have been doing their best to compass its destruction. The Welsh and Scottish owners go farther, and want the whole system of regulation established by the Act of 1930 abolished. Fortunately, most of the English coalowners do not take this view and wish the Act to be prolonged in an amended form. But even if the control of output and prices is allowed to go on there seems to be serious danger of the provision for compulsory amalgamations being suffered to lapse in face of the owners' opposition. This would be a disaster; for the industry will never be able to set its own house in order, in face of the immense complexity of the problems of valuation to which all schemes of voluntary fusions give rise. With such power as it has, the Reorganisation Committee is bound at best to have a hard task, since the nationalisation of the mineral rights is badly needed as a basis for a successful amalgamation policy. But the existence of the Committee secures at any rate some pressure for amalgamation, and it must on no account be allowed to die.

* * *

The question of miners' hours has also to be settled anew in the immediate future. Last year's Act stabilising hours and wage-rates expires in the middle of this year. Unless fresh legislation is passed, this means a return to the seven-hours day. Nobody expects such a return. The colliery owners, who have asked the Miners' Federation to meet them on the matter, are saying that they will have to cut wages drastically if the existing hours are reduced. The chief coal-producing countries, including Great Britain, have agreed upon a draft Convention for a maximum working shift of seven hours and a quarter, but there seems to be no prospect of any country ratifying or enforcing this Convention in the near future. Accordingly, the British coal industry will have to settle the future for itself, subject to the decision of Parliament, without any basis of international agreement. It seems likely that the existing hours of work will be maintained without change for a further period. If this is done, wages must clearly be stabilised as well, as they were temporarily last year, since the miners cannot be expected any more now than then to forgo the return to the seven-hours shift without any *quid pro quo*.

* * *

Our society is now so well organised for the manufacture of criminals that no one need be surprised to learn from the Home Office report for 1930 that there has been an increase in crime—against property rather than against persons—and that the increase has mainly been among young men. We keep hundreds of young men standing about, with nothing to do and nothing to hope for. Some of the bolder spirits inevitably seek an adventurous outlet. A few become "motor bandits." Smash and grab raids are easy to carry out and the raiders are comparatively seldom caught. The raids are carried out in stolen cars which are abandoned at an arranged spot where another car waits to carry off the booty. Why, as a useful measure, is there not a law making it compulsory to lock all cars in the driver's absence? But the minds of our pundits turn not towards giving young men work and making crime more difficult, but to the old foolish notion of trying to deter the criminal by severer punishment.

* * *

There seems a complete misapprehension on this subject even in the minds of judges. For years the Prison Commissioners have been urging the futility of "short sentences," i.e., of sending men to gaol for a week or a fortnight. They argue that if an effort were made—it seldom is made—to teach a man a trade in prison, three months' imprisonment would be useful, whereas a week is futile. But the current interpretation of the campaign against short sentences is that three years are given instead of eighteen months—which certainly does nothing to deter or to reform. In one respect there is an improvement. The brutality and absurdity of flogging as a punishment is at least gaining recognition and it is satisfactory to find the official Home Office spokesman admitting that its deterrent value is "doubtful." The British Empire is now almost alone in retaining corporal punishment as a regular part of its penal system. Anyone who wishes to read a scientific statement of its actual results should read the little book on the subject by George Benson and Dr. Edward Glover, published by the Howard League.

* * *

A country bookseller was asked by a customer to sell him Mr. Clarke's *My Northcliffe Diary* (published price 8s. 6d.) for 1s. 6d., "the same as Selfridge's were selling." The bookseller, who was anxious to sell the book at 8s. 6d., wrote to the publishers, Messrs. Gollancz, and requested "a credit note for the copies I had in stock." But the publishers had not remaindered the book, and had indeed protested against the cutting of prices. Whence then these cheap copies? According to the editor of the *Publisher and Bookseller* they are from our old friend The Book Society, whose members presumably did not share their committee's opinion on the merits of *My Northcliffe Diary* (it was "chosen" by The Book Society). Surely it is rather undignified for the Society to hurl copies of the discarded favourite on to the rubbish heap of quick remainders; though here the usual proviso, that new copies were not to be sold at reduced prices until a year after the date of publication, was ignored by the firm that purchased the books from The Book Society. Anyhow, this transaction seems strange from an organisation which gets books at specially low rates for circulation to its members at the ordinary published price.

YEAR XIII OR YEAR XV?

THIS is Year XIII of the new post-war era, or Year XV if we date the new era as beginning with the Russian Revolution rather than the Treaty of Versailles. The distinction is important; for behind it lies the entire question of the policy which, in every country in the world, sensible and world-patriotic men and women ought to be pursuing. Are we to try to build up yet again the shattered world system which the negotiators of Versailles thought they were replacing on firm and lasting foundations? Or are we, with differences based on varying national cultures and political and economic conditions, to set out to construct a radically new world order comparable with that which the Russians are struggling to build up within their vast and under-developed territory? Three years ago, most people—including most Socialists—outside Russia were in little doubt about the answer to this problem, and even held that the larger part of the work of reconstruction had been achieved. The devastated areas had been rebuilt; Europe had more than regained its pre-war standard of life, and was advancing fast in production and trade: nearly all the world was back on the gold standard; and even the menacing movement of economic nationalism seemed to have been held successfully in check since the Geneva Economic Conference of 1927.

But now, while most policies are still conceived in terms of reconstructing the old order rather than setting out to replace it by a new one, the doubts at the back of men's minds are far more formidable and insistent. There is a growing hesitancy about the assertions that the present slump is only the trough of a cyclical movement, and that we must touch bottom some time. For there is a real doubt whether the self-corrective tendencies of the slump within the capitalist order can come into play soon enough or strongly enough to avert a complete breakdown of the economic life of a number of countries: and it is increasingly realised that the slump is not purely an affair of economics, but involves countless political complications which the leading countries of the world seem exceedingly reluctant even to begin to straighten out.

But, despite these doubts, national policies, everywhere except in Russia, are still based on the attempt to reconstruct rather than to replace. And it is in most countries still extraordinarily difficult to think or plan in any other terms. It is so manifest that the great bulk of the populations of the leading countries—of Great Britain most of all—do not want revolution, and are even unprepared for any great and sudden change of economic and political system. What is most surprising, in face of the world situation, is the slow headway Communism makes in the great majority of countries, and still more the failure of Socialist Parties to move at all decisively to the left. Patching-up is still the approved basis of national policies; and most of the world's Socialists are giving active or passive support to attempts by the middle parties to patch up the capitalist order.

Can these efforts succeed? It is obvious that they are not succeeding at present, and that many of the patches are putting fresh obstacles in the way of world recovery. For the patching-up is proceeding for the most part on purely national lines, and its most obvious contributions are higher and higher tariffs, more and more drastic restrictions on imports and foreign exchanges, and a general scuttle for national shelter from the world storm. Attempts to face the problem on international lines have so far all broken down. The burdens of War Debts and Reparations remain unmitigated and increasing as gold prices fall; the Locarno and Kellogg Pacts and the Covenant of the League are regarded with far more of scepticism than of hope by public opinion as well as by the Governments which they bind. The Disarmament Conference has opened in a discouraging way at Geneva. The gold problem is unsettled, and the United States tariff unmodified. Great Britain has indeed made a temporary escape from the largely artificial financial crisis of last year. But her economic position is still highly insecure, especially in face of the continued threat of collapse and default among the countries which are her debtors. No one is really confident that June will see a settlement of the Reparations problem. No one in his senses expects that British prosperity can be securely re-established by a protective tariff.

Yet, if we had to think of Great Britain alone, there would be no doubt that the reconstruction of capitalism is still a possible policy. But we cannot think of Great Britain alone, since the serious threats to the survival of the capitalist order come from elsewhere. If British capitalism collapses—as distinct from merely passing through another crisis—it will be because capitalism has already broken down elsewhere, and thus made untenable the position of the British capitalist, with his extreme dependence on the world market.

The occasion of these thoughts is the publication of Sir Arthur Salter's *Recovery* (Bell, 10s. 6d.), the most important study of world economic problems since *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. Sir Arthur Salter has come back to England after a long period of service under the League of Nations, and he went to Geneva with a great reputation based on his work as a British administrator during the war. He knows from A to Z everything that has happened in international politics and economics since the League was set up. He is exceedingly clear-headed, and has the power and courage to say in plain language exactly what he means. He really possesses an international mind and, while he remains English in his fundamental outlook, can see things as they appear to Frenchmen and Germans and Americans—to national and political opinion in all the countries with whose representatives he has been brought constantly into contact. All, that is, except the Russians. Of the very existence of a Russian point of view, capable of influencing the world, he seems scarcely conscious.

Sir Arthur Salter's book is by far the most complete, cogent and sensible programme that has yet been produced for the reconstruction of world capitalism. It is far-reaching and goes down to fundamentals, and yet it everywhere outlines policies which nations as they are might conceivably be persuaded to accept. It is full of proposals which are not the proposals Sir Arthur Salter would like to make, but steps towards them just compatible with the present condition of national policy and opinion. Not universal Free Trade, but gradual and mutual lowering of tariffs and modifications of commercial restrictions: not disarmament, but gradual and agreed reductions; not even cancellation of War Debts and Reparations, but only a drastic scaling-down of both, and of other international debts with which they are inextricably bound up.

It is all extremely sensible and persuasive. Yet, when the entire policy has been outlined, it provokes serious doubts. There are such a number of sensible things that each country is called upon to do, and to do quickly; such a number of proposals, each just acceptable in itself, and yet in their cumulative effect highly unpleasant to a host of powerful vested interests and prejudices. Can a world which has so busily for years past been doing most of the wrong things possibly be persuaded to do so very many of the right things all at once? And, even if a start is made along the right course, can progress be rapid enough, or clear enough in its beneficial results, to avert catastrophe and convert public opinion in the various countries from the pursuit of inconsistent and mutually destructive national ends?

Moreover, even if the thing can be done, is the reconstruction of world-capitalism, with the liability to a recurrence of crises like the present, really what we want, or the best alternative to world chaos and dissolution at which we can aim? It is remarkable how little Sir Arthur Salter has to say, all through his book, about the position and the aspira-

tions of the working classes in the various countries. He has an acute perception of the dangers of international war and economic chaos; but of the importance and relevance of class-antagonisms he says just nothing at all. His world is a world of nation-States, each conceived as based on complete internal unity, or at most suffering from internal dissensions which are a barrier to effective international co-operation. This picture, however, is as far from the truth as the Communist vision of a world working-class struggling in unity to break its chains, while wholly regardless of national loyalties and traditions of value. A world reconstructed in terms of national capitalism will fail utterly to resolve class-antagonism. It may also be a world sharply divided, with the contagious example of Russia as a perpetual menace to the stability of its reconstructed order.

Is there not, then, some third policy, which is neither a re-building of capitalism nor revolutionary Communism in the Russian sense? Sir Arthur Salter means his reconstructed capitalism to be something widely different from capitalism as it used to be. He wants more public control, more national and international planning, a League of Nations greatly strengthened in the economic as well as in the political sphere. His vision is rather like that of our British advocates of National Planning on a reformed capitalist basis, translated into international terms. But he would leave the essential structure of capitalism intact.

This is where we disagree with him, while agreeing with the great majority of the specific international measures he suggests. We still believe that it is possible to make large positive advances towards Socialism, or even Communism, in this and other countries without revolution, in any sense in which revolution implies violence or civil war. And we doubt if the countries of the world will be able to take the required steps—even the minimum steps—for setting their economic relations in order until they have infused a large element of Socialism into their national systems, and so equipped themselves with the means of controlling effectively their national economic affairs. We do not believe that capitalist countries suffering internally from sharp class-conflicts of their own will be able to build up a satisfactory system of mutual co-operation one with another. That is why measures, each individually reasonable and practicable, look impracticable as soon as they are presented as cumulative elements in a world programme of reform. For there is a limit to the number of patches that an old garment can be made to stand.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL MASTER

RECENT controversy in these columns concerning the public schools has revealed a difference of opinion, not only as to how far the alleged evils exist, but also, granted their existence, whether they are caused primarily by the "system" or by the men who work it. "The cause of the trouble is the weak housemaster," says one. "Good men," says another, "can really achieve very little under a bad system." Neither view can be pressed too far. A boy may have a veritable archangel for housemaster, but he will miss a good deal in his education if his curriculum is overcrowded or ill-planned and his form masters are dull or inefficient. On the other hand, within the "system" conditions can vary enormously between different houses of the same school. The present writer was in the Army when *The Loom of Youth* appeared. By the same post he had letters from two boys of the same age, in the same form, but in different houses. One of them described the book as "impossible rubbish." The other wrote, "It is so true to conditions here that I can hardly believe it was written about another school."

The question as between men and system, however, is like the question of the priority of the chicken or the egg. The point of practical importance is—what is there in present conditions to attract or deter the young man of initiative and ideas who is thinking of entering the profession, and what are his chances of promotion? The public schools will not come to an end to-day or to-morrow. When they do, it will probably be for economic rather than for educational reasons. Meanwhile, the more intelligent and enlightened masters there are in positions of responsibility the better.

We must remember, first of all, that, as things go, the work is not ill-paid. The master is, and is likely to remain (so long as the whole system is economically possible), better off than he was before the war. Salaries have increased, and have been graded more fairly, pensions have been instituted, and the unlimited tenure of boarding-houses, which allowed Victorian housemasters to produce their extensive families, has been superseded in most schools by a time limit. This works more equitably, and quickens promotion. It must be remembered, too, that the public school master, unlike most professional men, is paid *while he is learning his job*, that is to say, during his first two or three years of teaching; for the ordinary headmaster of a public school, rightly or wrongly, still refuses to insist that a young man should have received any professional training before he appoints him to his staff.

As regards his social position and standing in the world of educated men and women, the public school master can feel that there is not much wrong with it. The English never take schoolmasters quite seriously, or believe that their work is "work" in the ordinary sense of the word; but with that fact admitted, the intending master at a public school (who has normally himself been at one of these schools and at one of the older universities) can feel that he will occupy a position which his more conventional friends and relations will regard as eminently useful, if not particularly adventurous. It is not surprising that he commonly regards himself and his prospects with considerable satisfaction.

If, however, he can look outside the ideas and conventions in which he has presumably been bred, he will realise that there is a good deal in his position that is disquieting. Like or dislike it as they may, the public schools are outside the national system of education, in an almost watertight compartment. Our young master must face the fact that he is teaching in one of the schools that are *class schools*—economically, if not socially. He may honestly try by means of teachers' associations to fraternise with members of his profession who belong to other types of school, but he will find himself repeatedly confronted by a barrier that is something more than the difference between boarding and day school. "Don't go there," was said not long ago by a shrewd observer to a young public school man who was thinking of joining the staff of a municipal secondary school. "If you teach better than they do, they will dislike you, and if you teach worse, they will despise you." The young master whose ideas range beyond the walls of his own school will resent this feeling of division, which has certainly not diminished with the growth in importance of the larger secondary day schools. The present sharp cleavage between different grades of school does in effect mean that he is often cut off from many of the bigger issues and developments of education as they affect national life.

Formerly, the public school master, aware of all this, and aware, too, of certain points in which he was something of an amateur as compared with other more thoroughly trained members of his profession, took refuge in a feeling of superiority, based on what he himself considered to be the unique character of the great public schools and the contribution made by them to the community.

Lately, however, as the correspondence in these columns has shown, there has been some loss of faith in this creed, even in quarters where it was formerly unquestioned. We are less sure than we were once that the kind of leadership produced by the prefect system of the public schools,

though it may breed admirable captains of county cricket elevens, is what is wanted in modern politics or industry. It is not quite certain that, by itself, it can be trusted to do all that is necessary even for tropical dependencies. Again, the amateur ideal of all-round accomplishment is breaking down in the modern world before the growing demand for technical knowledge and skill. This is true not only in industry, commerce, and the professions, but also, ironically enough, in games and athletics, where public-school men may claim in a sense to have been first in the field. The day schools, too, and many smaller boarding schools are now showing that for any one type of school to claim a monopoly of "character training" is mere insolence. Other schools are also proving that they can retain the affection of their old boys, but without, perhaps, that excess of emotion which sometimes makes the loyal public school man rather absurd. Mr. Dersingham, in *Angel Pavement*, is not in the least a caricature. He is a rather merciless portrait of a man well known to many of us.

The fact is that a master at a public school belongs to a comparatively small society which is, in more than the ordinary sense of the word, exclusive. It shuts out a great deal of healthy criticism, and keeps him complacently secure from contact with what he does not want to see or hear. Yet it is for that outside world that he is presumably training his pupils, especially in their last years at school. It is a society dominated by adolescent standards and ideals (corporate spirit, good form, physical fitness, and the rest) and always in danger of thinking that they are the *only* standards and ideals. Intelligent people are beginning to wonder whether that last year at school, which used to be valued so highly, does not, in fact, prevent the boy from maturing, and help to keep him in a kind of petrified adolescence. It is the effect of this atmosphere upon the master, particularly the unmarried master, far more than the fact that his time-table is different from that of other professional workers, or that his tastes are more intellectual (are they always more intellectual?) which makes him so often a bad "mixer" with his fellow men. The work and play which make up school life are apt to engross him to such an extent that he is partly lost to other human interests. The celibate master is the worst offender, but the verdict of a jury of schoolmasters' wives would declare that he is not alone in his guilt.

In another respect a lack of faith or confidence is likely to disquiet the young master. Clearly men become schoolmasters, as they become anything else, for a number of different reasons. In these days, whether or not we *know* more, we certainly *talk* more than of old about our unconscious motives; and we are probably inclined to look with a less respectful and more questioning eye upon the man who, after passing through school and college, prefers to return to school life rather than to face the world of ordinary men and women. It may not be necessary to call every unmarried master over thirty a repressed homosexual. After all, there is such a thing as sublimation; but there are undoubtedly aspects of these communities that in the case of some temperaments appeal to weakness as well as to strength. The earnest young man who was once quite sure that he had a vocation is now not always certain that he has more than an inhibition.

It might be thought that now more than ever before there were opportunities for able men of originality and boldness to guide the public schools into fresh courses. Unfortunately, there is not much evidence that governing bodies (with some honourable exceptions) and other influential people, such as associations of old boys, are at all inclined to take this view. When headmasters and assistant masters are being appointed, initiative, ideas, and a wide interest in education do not commonly weigh for much against the ability and desire to perpetuate the traditions of a particular school, or to conform to the recognised standards. Too frequently in the public school world the ultimate control lies with bodies or individuals who themselves represent the great weakness of public school training; for they combine the prejudices of age with a sentimental attachment to the memories and ideals of their own adolescence. Here, as in so many spheres of English life, the chief obstacle to change is the firm entrenchment of the old men; only in this case the old men so often happen not to have grown up.

JAMES HERBERT.

DIVORCE BY LEGAL FICTION

WHILE general litigation steadily declines, one class alone soars ever upward. Divorce, more particularly undefended divorce, seems likely to be the lawyer's last ditch. Should the poverty of potential litigants, the expansion of Whitehall's arbitrary activities or the growth of private arbitration ever drive him from the field of commercial utility, his last light task will be to pipe the tune for those who wish to change partners in the dance of life.

Against such an eventuality, let him prepare a pleasant tune, for there are rumours and more than rumours of dissatisfaction that at present the only possible return ticket from the altar should be a double hotel bill. The legal anomaly (if the critics are right) lies in this, that what is in reality divorce by mutual consent must, as the law now stands, still be cast in the traditional triangular mould of faithless husband, wronged wife, and interloper.

Thus, the undefended divorce has in many cases ceased altogether to be an action at law and has become the conventional performance of an arbitrarily prescribed legal ritual, with the King's Proctor put in to make it more difficult. Yet it is now twenty years since the Royal Commission on Divorce and Matrimonial Causes reported. Since Parliament obviously dare not act, how much can the judges do, for our mountainous case-law bears witness to the fact that legislation is not the monopoly of the legislature? A glance at a rather quaint passage of legal history supplies a parallel and a suggestion.

Once upon a time, the wisdom of our ancestors saw fit to make it as difficult as possible for a dispossessed owner of land to get it back again. Such twisted and cumbersome proceedings as the assizes of *novel disseisin* or of *morte d'ancestor* (the names are enough for a layman) made the wrong rather preferable to the remedy. But the dispossessed tenant (Heaven knows why!) had much easier terms, and if he could prove that A had given him a lease, and that B had turned him out of possession, his sailing was reasonably plain. Naturally, the wronged freeholder longed to share this happy privilege and eventually, with the co-operation of the Courts, he succeeded. Thus X, the dispossessed landowner, would lease the land in dispute to a friend and confederate, who eventually became standardised as John Doe. Together they would go on to the land for the purpose of being hustled off again by another friendly conspirator, Richard Roe, as he finally became. Doe, the fictitious tenant, would then sue Roe, the fictitious ejector, and when B, the real man in possession, was apprised of the proceedings, he was only allowed to defend his title to ownership if he entered into the spirit of the game and did not dispute the validity of the opening moves. This was the first stage. In the second, which lasted till modern times, the pantomime was dispensed with and Doe and Roe performed their curious antics on paper only.

Now, quaint as all this seems, the undefended divorce has already reached Stage No. 1. Nothing remains but to complete the process and move on to the final stage, for from a formality to a fiction there is only one short step. Let the Petitioner allege that the Respondent has committed adultery with Joan Doe or Richard Roe, as the case may be. If no answer were forthcoming, proof could be dispensed with or reduced to a formality.

Between them Doe and Roe could originate divorce for incompatibility of temperament. First the Petitioner would allege adultery with Joan Doe. By special rules of Court, the Respondent would not be allowed to deny the charge, but would have to make against the Petitioner a counter-allegation of adultery with Richard Roe, which she in her turn would have to admit. Both parties having now committed adultery (on paper), the Court would have a discretion as to whether or not it would grant relief (for such is the law). It could then proceed to try the real point at issue—whether on the merits of their capacity to put up with each other the link between the parties should be riveted or broken (costs against the one to blame).

Very circuitous, you say. Yes, but in the light of historical experience very English. Besides, if the legislators will not make necessary laws, the judges must. Either marriage is indissoluble or it is not, and since, for better or for worse, the law of England is committed to the latter view, justice has nothing to gain by making sordid sensationalism the condition precedent of intervention. One view or the other is consistent, but not the worst of both views with the advantages of neither. F. C.

THE ANNIVERSARY

IT has often been observed that, the older the world grows the more crowded history becomes with famous names and famous events. In vain does oblivion do her utmost to bury even the puny dead beyond the reach of professors: one day a professor will unbury even the puniest of them and proclaim him a giant. Not content with the history our grandfathers knew, the archaeologists have in recent years been pursuing their ghoulish work among the graves of races that one had hoped were forgotten for ever. I, who never liked history at school, have often wondered what is the purpose of all this digging. And, after long consideration, I have come to the conclusion that the diggers are in search of more dead men who may be made the excuse for banquets.

Never in the world's history has there been such a passion for discovering dead men in order to celebrate their genius with a seven-course dinner. Every year the calendar is studied under the microscope in the hope of finding yet another victim for the confirmed banqueteer. We like to dine, and we like to talk, and those of us who write like to have something to write about. And what better excuse for dining and talking and writing could we have than the fact that somebody or other died on the same date as the dinner fifty or a hundred or five thousand years ago. The committee of banqueteers, who supervised all anniversary banquets, look through the months in search of someone who died on a good date for dining, and, having found one, they rub their hands with joy and arrange to turn the fiftieth anniversary of his demise into a jubilee.

I am myself, on the whole, in favour of celebrating the anniversaries of the beginnings and ends of great men. I cannot agree with those saturnine censors who denounce eating and drinking and talking and writing in honour of a dead man of genius as hypocrisy. It may be true that a year ago only a handful of pious students took the trouble to read Goethe because he had not been dead more than ninety-nine years, while this year, because he has been dead a hundred, everybody is reading him and most people are writing or making speeches about him. It is also true that most of the people who are reading or reading about Goethe this year will have abandoned him next year for somebody else who has been dead for the proper period. There is nothing either shallow or dishonest in this. Reading is a social, as well as a personal, employment; and, if we are social beings we must read those authors whose names at the moment are in the air. In youth, when our passion for literature is strongest and least open to suspicion, we read the books that our friends read. We may quarrel about them, and have our personal favourites among authors that none of our friends can endure; but we cannot help being curious about books that everybody we care for is talking about. Stimulated curiosity has always been a valid excuse for reading an author, and what does it matter whether the curiosity is stimulated by the talk of friends or by the trumpetings of an anniversary?

The saturnine censor, however, turns from these anniversaries with disgust, especially if it is the anniversary of an author admired by himself that is being celebrated. He reads hollowness into every speech, humbug into every article devoted to the praise of the great man. He even seems to think that in some strange way the great man is being insulted and sullied by this orgy of writing and speech-making, and that the reputation of a man of genius is being endangered by the foolish talk of the ignorant. I remember hearing a man saying that it would take years for Keats to emerge from all the rubbish that was talked about him during the centenary of his death. I cannot for the life of me see, however, why human beings should be debarred from enjoying themselves on the anniversary of a great man's death, even though it involves the utterance of Iliads of rubbish. Talking rubbish is one of the most harmless of occupations, and most of the mighty dead have been accused of indulging in it themselves.

As for banquets, they are one of the least foolish ways of paying honour to the dead. I remember once marching in a long procession in which every marcher carried a bunch of daffodils to lay on Shakespeare's grave, and the whole affair seemed to me not to come from the heart as eating and drinking do. It may be argued that all that is needed to celebrate the birth or death of a man of genius is a little meeting of the faithful and a few well-considered speeches. But it is the grand function of the banquet that it postpones those well-considered speeches to such an hour that the speakers are compelled by the restlessness of the audience to leave out three-fourths of what they intended to say. I would rather go through the whole menu from oysters to fruit in honour of John Bunyan than listen to one long speech about him. Perhaps, at the anniversary banquets of the future, speeches will be dispensed with altogether. A dead man's toast is best drunk in silence.

One of the great charms of banquets is that they are so free from the spirit of vulgar adulation. Many of those who attend them are honest, good-natured people who care little about the great man who is the excuse for the meal, but who enjoy being at a party. I often meet people at anniversary banquets who confess that they have never read a line of the author whose memory they are about to drink. "No, I'm not a literary bloke," one of them will say, "but old Parker's a great friend of mine, and asked me to come along." I seem once to have attended an anniversary banquet at which neither anybody I spoke to nor myself had ever heard of the man whose birthday we were celebrating, and even the chairman spoke so vaguely that I began to doubt whether his ignorance was not as complete. To make the best of a banquet, indeed, or of any anniversary, it is not necessary to know anything about the hero of the occasion. I remember once travelling the better part of a hundred miles to celebrate the tercentenary of a man of whose name and past existence a week previously I had been entirely ignorant. I travelled in the same train with one of the chief speakers, and I found that he could not enlighten me. The crowd who took part in the celebration were, I believe, in the same plight. Yet never have I heard acclamations more enthusiastic. At every mention of the dead man's name we roared applause. It was as though we felt we owed him something for having forgotten him, and were trying to send him a message to the skies to say that we would never forget him again. Never have I seen a more rapt expression on the faces of an audience than

when some speaker made a carefully vague allusion to our forgotten hero. Never have I seen a sincerer demonstration of love for a dead man about whom nobody seemed to know anything. I myself was thrilled in every nerve, and still in memory I feel waves of emotion pouring through me, crossed by little waves of doubt as to whether the man ever really lived.

What is clear from all this is that we human beings love to celebrate; and that whom or what we celebrate scarcely matters. I have a friend who cannot be kept away from banquets if he gets word of them in advance. He makes no distinction between banquets in honour of someone he loves and banquets in honour of someone he loathes. He is an atheist, but he will put on a white tie to eat seven courses in honour of a bishop. He regards music with as much abhorrence as most of us regard the sound of a pneumatic drill; but tell him that there is to be a banquet in honour of Haydn, and his face will brighten at the prospect of the food that he can eat in well-dressed company, even under the auspices of a man whom he regards as a pest. He gives it as his excuse that he likes to see the people who are there—that he enjoys looking at the celebrated living who are celebrating the celebrated dead. His accounts of these banquets consist mainly of appreciative remarks about the food, and derogatory remarks about the people who have spoken during the evening. He meets me afterwards with a melancholy face only when the food as well as the speakers has been to his extreme distaste. He would rather eat good food in memory of a missionary than honour Ingersoll over a dish of tough chicken.

Sometimes I wonder whether he is not the normal banqueter. Certainly, when one reads in the newspapers the lists of the guests at various banquets, one finds the same names cropping up on an extraordinary variety of occasions. No man could possibly be interested in so many causes and artists and poets and scientific discoverers as some of these steady and determined banqueters. All they wish, it seems to me, is an excuse—whether the death of a poet, or the birthday of the discoverer of cough mixture, or the anniversary of the introduction of the penny post—for eating and drinking surrounded by a multitude of white ties. If the proprietors of the great restaurants were wise they would organise anniversary banquets on every night of the year, and give the mob of born banqueters an excuse for eating enthusiastically from Sunday to Saturday, whether in honour of Napoleon, or Faraday, or Mary Queen of Scots, or Eugene Aram. If I had money I would build a restaurant on these lines and call it the Anniversary Restaurant. And the mob would flock to it. And famous men would be praised nightly to the heart-stirring accompaniment of the clatter of knives and forks. Y. Y.

BALLADE OF THE RHYMSTER IN REVOLT

WHEN first I planned my ten days' flight
From London's din and duty's chain
It still seemed possible to write
Some score of lines in caustic vein
On topics easy to obtain—
One has to keep one's self *au fait*,
And every scribbler must be fain
To read the *Times* on holiday.

Alas! the task that looked so light
Proves an intolerable strain:
Each morning's paper casts a blight
On rolling Downs and smiling plain.
While every issue proves again
How far mankind has gone astray
From common sense, it seems insane
To read the *Times* on holiday.

The I.R.A. prepares for fight;
The Japanese the League disdain;
And Central Europe's hopeless plight
Drags world-wide dangers in its train;
In unemployment's endless drain
Our boasted surplus wastes away—
My faith! it needs a steadier brain
To read the *Times* on holiday.

Envoi

Readers! on all the vast inane
Of politics, I've nought to say;
It goes too much against the grain
To read the *Times* on holiday.

MACFLECKNOE.

THE POLLING BOOTH IN THE JUNGLE

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN INDIA.

INDIA is getting a little tired of peripatetic commissions of inquiry. They wander from one Provincial capital to another during the cold weather, and the serried ranks of the illustrious obscure are paraded to give evidence before them. In the intervals between hearing innumerable witnesses the European members of the commissions are busily engaged in picking up a little local colour, for one of their qualifications is usually that they should never have been east of Suez. Possibly it is felt that a mixture of enthusiastic Englishmen, who know too little, and of disillusioned Indian politicians, who know too much, is the best for carrying on this business of turning India into a democracy. Certainly the Franchise Committee, which is now touring India, has a strong family resemblance to its several predecessors whose reports form such a weighty monument of our rule in India. There is something pathetic in the confidence of those in authority that something valuable will emerge from a new set of individuals tackling problems which have already been discussed *ad nauseam*. There would have been more interest in the work of the Franchise Committee if the British Government, as was expected at the Round Table Conference, had previously given a decision on the question of communal electorates and communal representation. But this has not been done, and the Committee is hastily covering much the same ground as the Simon Commission covered at greater leisure, and, previously to that, the Muddiman Committee and Mr. Montagu.

The main problem before the Committee is simple enough. We are all agreed that there is going to be a real transfer of authority in India, and are anxious that the transfer should not be made to a small group of middle-class town dwellers who may have admirable ideas on certain subjects, but who have definite interests of their own which are often opposed to those of the great bulk of their fellow-countrymen. The Englishman's chief interest in the new Government is that it shall be stable, and he can see little hope for stability unless there is some real division of power as between the villager and townsman, the rich and poor, the landlord and the tenant, the higher and the lower caste Hindu, the Moslem *ryot* and the Hindu *bunniah*. In almost every case it is the numerically strongest group which is most likely to be under-represented in the Governments of the future. Democracy and a wide franchise ought in theory to solve this problem, but in practice there are innumerable difficulties which make one wonder if democracy can ever function in India. Here is the bulk of the population represented by Santa Singh and his wife, with two acres of wheat-growing land in the Punjab. His little hamlet is ten miles of dusty tracks from the nearest village in which it would be possible to have a polling booth. Abdul Kerim in Bengal is in still worse case. For months at a time he is almost marooned on

the little piece of land, a few feet higher than the surrounding rice fields, on which he has built his hut. Then there is the Mahar living in his little *wadi* outside the Deccan village, and Ghond, the hunter, to whom the jungle is an open book, but politics a closed one.

The first trouble is that few of these know anyone's name outside their village and the bazaar of the nearest market town. It is only by immense trouble that the name of an individual or a party can be broadcast over the Indian countryside. The comparative effectiveness of the Congress Party in the villages is that they concentrated on popularising one or two names, that of Mr. Gandhi and perhaps the local Congress leader, and they connected them with one simple idea, that of opposition to the two institutions which the countryman knows, the Government and, in *zemindari* areas, the landlord. The average villager is probably quite capable of understanding, and giving a fairly shrewd judgment on, a simple political issue, but the difficulty will be getting that political idea connected in his mind with the name of a politician. Even if he succeeds in doing this there remains the next problem of getting him to put a mark against the right name at a polling station. It is extremely hard to find enough reliable polling officers to take charge of booths, and the villager will normally have a long way to go. When he reaches the booth he has to recognise the right name, and the question of illiteracy becomes important. It is too dangerous to allow someone else to point out the right name, and the method usually adopted is to make use of some colour or sign. Santa Singh or Abdul Kerim has therefore to connect an idea, first of all with a strange name and then with a colour or an elephant. There is still another difficulty if Mrs. Abdul Kerim is to have a vote. She is probably quite as intelligent as her husband, but no one knows her by sight. In some parts she is *pardanashin*, and has no intention of displaying even her middle-aged charms to some stranger.

The mechanical side of voting and sending up representatives is the real trouble. The peasant and the village craftsman probably are more capable of giving a sensible decision on some straightforward issue than the urban clerk or shopkeeper, but there is a natural tendency to give too much weight to the latter just because it is much easier to work a form of democracy based on a fairly high property or educational qualification. It would seem, therefore, necessary to establish one main principle, which has already been partly accepted in connection with the communal question. If it is necessary to cut down the actual number of voters, then the representation should be, as far as possible, on a population and not on a voting basis. When allotting seats as between Hindus and Moslems, it has been usual to work on a census basis. If the same principle were applied as between town and country, one of the great disadvantages of the present system would disappear, and, though it is impossible to prevent townsmen standing for most of the seats, you would avoid the present over-representation of the urban areas. The successful candidate would represent fewer voters but an equal number of people.

Another proposal which is receiving considerable support is for indirect voting, either by each village sending up a few representatives or by forming groups of twenty or thirty people who would send a delegate to choose the candidate. There are many arguments in favour of such a system in a huge country like India, and some form of indirect voting will be essential if the franchise is to be extended for the central legislature. Mr. Gandhi has declared himself in favour of such a system, though the Congress is divided on the subject. One view is to take the village as a unit, but there are several objections to this. In many parts of India the country population live in little scattered hamlets, too small for any village life. In other districts the failure to revive the *panchaiyet* system suggests that the village is not a very satisfactory unit. It is doubtful whether it is advisable to fit this old structure into a system which one hopes will work for some generations. It is easy to idealise the old Indian village life, but apart from the fact that it had in some areas virtually disappeared before the British ever came to India, it was founded, like the Greek States, upon a form of slavery, the perpetual degradation of village servants and certain castes.

Another proposal, which is much more likely to be incorporated into the final scheme, is to use what is called the *mukhi* system, and for the electorate to be grouped into sets of, say, twenty which would send delegates to do their voting. It is suggested that by this means one could enfranchise almost the whole population, even in the country districts. Some Indian politicians are looking ahead and calculating the immense cost of future elections if fought with a large electorate in scattered districts. They are inclined to support the *mukhi* system, but others seem to imagine that anything but elections on the English system must contain a catch somewhere. It is possible that both systems will be used together, for there is no real objection to some constituencies being organised on group basis, while direct election is continued for the compact urban seats. It is to be hoped that, whatever system is adopted, every candidate will have to realise that he cannot afford to neglect any large section of the population in his constituency. There are bound to be many anomalies in the earlier days, but Ceylon seems to have justified the adoption of what is almost universal suffrage, and this will probably be the best safeguard for the future of India, the only modification being the introduction of indirect voting in all except the few very thickly populated areas.

Correspondence

THE PATENT MEDICINE SCANDAL

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—With pathetic surprise and pleasure I came upon Dr. Harry Roberts' article on this subject in your issue of yesterday, for I was Chairman of the Select Committee upon whose Report his article is based, and the entire original draft of the Report was written by myself. Surprise—for I thought it had been forgotten; pleasure—that so alert and informed a writer should have only approval for it; and pathos—that after nearly two years of very hard work by my colleagues and myself, after the presentation of a Report crammed with statements of historical, legal and scientific fact, and with the bluntest personal denunciations, none of which statements has been shown to be inaccurate, to recollect when the Report was formally presented it bore on its face the words, "Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 4th August, 1914." That was the day war was declared. Naturally it was as if the Report had been dropped into Vesuvius. That unhappy coincidence of dates was, I venture to think, the salvation of the patent medicine business in this country.

The scandal is of vast dimensions, and there is no reason whatever why it should not be dealt with immediately and drastically. But in discussing it two facts must be borne in mind. (1) Only the very few papers in this country which do not accept these advertisements will mention the scandal at all. Millions of pounds a year are spent in this advertising—many of the smaller provincial papers could hardly exist without it, and one hostile remark about a "remedy" would cause the advertisements of it to cease instantly. And (2) an action for libel, claiming heavy damages and backed by large capital, would probably be launched instantly, and as the proprietors of any remedy would produce a dozen witnesses swearing to have been benefited by it, the defendants would stand a poor chance.

The Select Committee was in the unique position of being immune from action at law. Before we began work I appealed to the Speaker of the House of Commons to give a ruling upon our position in this regard. He replied in effect that in the absence of the exhibition of malice the House of Commons would protect us. Further, we were given the great power "to send for persons, papers and records," and how great this was may be judged from one incident. We desired information regarding a person in the provinces whom we suspected of making

improper representations, and we requested the Chief Constable of the County to provide this. He refused. We summoned him to appear before us. He declined, and the Home Secretary supported him in this attitude. Whereupon our clerk was instructed to inform the Home Secretary that we should require his own personal attendance before us, unless the information required was immediately forthcoming. He came at once. The details will be found in par. 41 of our Report.

The lesson of all this is that the patent medicine scandal cannot even be effectively discussed except with the protection of Parliament. But further discussion is really not needed. The scandal is gross. More than enough facts about it are in our Report. Our practical recommendations can readily be incorporated in a short Bill. Dr. Harry Roberts' proposals are in these recommendations. Nothing is lacking—except the will to act.

If our Report is still in print (it is No. 414 of 1914, price 3d., from the Stationery Office) I may perhaps recommend its perusal to anyone wishing for an instructive and really amusing document, which contains much remarkable matter about many of the most fashionable and widely sold "remedies" of to-day.

Reform Club, HENRY NORMAN.
April 3rd.

THE ARISTOCRATIC EMBRACE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am glad to see "Critic's" outspoken references to the social corruption of some Labour leaders. I was one of those who, during the life-time of the late Government, used to read with mixed amusement and disgust the long lists of guests at this, that and the other function in Downing Street. So far as I could judge, the lists were very much the same as would have appeared if the Tories had been in power and, if the middle and working-class supporters of the Government were also permitted to meet their political leaders socially, the fact received little publicity.

In my letter to you of August 25th last, when I indulged in political prophecy with unhappy success, I suggested also that the notion of individual simplicity of social life needed to be emphasised. I had much in mind the conduct of the social climbers who have used politics so skilfully for their purpose. May I, at the risk of sounding old-fashioned, now suggest that those of our Labour leaders to whom politics means something more than an opportunity of the social climb should join together and pledge themselves publicly to fight the numerous social practices and symbols which unquestionably mark the gulf between the few and the many. Without attempting to be exhaustive, is it not clear that the acceptance of titles, the wearing of foolish dresses and uniforms at Court and at Government functions, the elaboration of meals in the long round of luncheons and dinners which constitutes official hospitality, make an effective horizontal barrier in the social life of the nation? Indeed, does not the peculiar uniform worn by men as evening dress operate in the same direction? It is idle to argue that these things are meaningless trifles—accidental excrescences on the surface of social life. They are in truth the essential paraphernalia of the top part of a social structure which is cut deeply in two. And the attack on these practices and symbols will be something which the man and woman below the line will understand.

Such an attack can be made by women perhaps even better than by men. There are men and women in the Labour Party who should be honoured for their refusal of the social "embrace." A public statement of faith on these points by a few dozen of our political leaders and a pledge against sharing in the practices I have mentioned would show us of the rank and file what we may look for in the future and would help to keep the weaker brethren from corruption. MIDDLE CLASS.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

Sir,—In a generous reference to my pamphlet "Towards the New Labour Party," "Critic" refers to my omission of "one of the most important elements," by which he explains that he means "the society corruption" of the Labour leaders who subsequently went National. And he substantiates the familiar charge by a reference to these ministers "spending their week-ends in aristocratic houses or their Saturdays hunting with Society hounds." I should be very sorry to have omitted any "important element" in my consideration of the factors which led up to the catastrophe of Labour, and I am reluctant to suppose that the author of "A London Diary" can be descending to the uncritical inaccuracies of the campaign of personal innuendo which is now being conducted by politicians who have been forced to abandon argument on the political merits of the case. I, therefore, venture to inquire—of how many week-ends spent by these ministers as guests in aristocratic houses, and of how many Saturdays spent riding with Society hounds during the entire course of the late Labour Government is "Critic" able to produce evidence? GODFREY ELTON.

Oxford.

["Critic" writes:—"Mr. Elton knows well enough that I spoke of week-ending with the aristocracy and attending society meets (I could quote particular examples, if there were any point in doing so) merely as illustrations of a tendency to hunt with the aristocratic pack while running with the Labour hare. I believe this social embrace to have been a very important factor in making the late Labour Government ineffective and my criticism was not confined to those of its members who joined the National Government, though several of these had been especially diligent in earning a dress-shirt reputation."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THE NEW SCHOOL

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Harwood in his letter on the "New School" shows that he has entirely misconceived the whole spirit and underlying principles of the Dalton Plan. There may be some misguided individuals who use the Dalton system as a new, and perhaps more efficient, method of getting children to amass statistical and other knowledge from text books, but this is a travesty of the ideal Miss Parkhurst set before us when she originated the Plan. Neither would Mr. Harwood find, if he visited any of the numerous Dalton schools now flourishing in this country, that the children in the least resembled the dry-as-dust professors who he presumes haunt the Reading Room of the British Museum. Mr. Harwood wants children taught imaginatively—not intellectually. He is afraid that by encouraging children to read and discover for themselves, as they do under the Dalton Plan, we shall be "projecting our intellectual shackles on to the minds of the next generation." It seems to me that the work of the educator is two-fold—firstly to give the child ample freedom and encouragement to express himself on the artistic, creative and imaginative side, and secondly to train his intelligence so that he does not merely accept existing standards and conventions, but can think critically and scientifically about any subject that is put before him. To my mind this is why the Dalton system is superior to any other type of new education; it combines both the imaginative and the scientific approach to the problems of living. In the group work that goes on in any good Dalton school, the acting of original and other plays, the art, the rhythmic work and all the innumerable co-operative activities connected with the social subjects the children are studying, the child has ample opportunity to express his personality and to develop his imaginative and artistic powers. But added to this in his individual work time the child is expected to carry out his ordinary studies in the spirit of a research student in a laboratory. He wants to discover: imparted knowledge from his elders is very little use to him. There is nothing "arid or inhuman" in the way these children set to work; behind it all is the living interest in life and the spirit of inquiry which has fostered scientific growth and brought about reform in all ages. As Mr. Harwood says, we want our children to have an imaginative understanding of life, but we also want them to have a keen, critical insight into the practical world as it is to-day, not to be gulled by newspapers, or to be swept away by emotional appeals, and we shall only get this by training children to use the accumulative knowledge of the ages as a background to their own spirit of inquiry and research—and this is what the Dalton system is aiming at doing. MARGARET BARCLAY.

Sherwood School, Epsom.

THE ARMAMENT TRAFFIC

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your issue of March 26th contained very interesting information on the sale of munitions from European countries to Japan and China. It may interest your readers to know of what is happening in the United States with regard to this traffic.

The State Department successfully brought pressure to forbid the hearing in the House of Representatives of the Fish Resolu-

tion forbidding the shipment of arms to nations engaged in armed conflict. Representative Hamilton Fish commenting on the refusal of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to hold a hearing on his Bill, states that this refusal is a victory for the war profiteers. In the U.S. Senate, Senator Dill introduced a resolution forbidding the export of arms to China and Japan. This resolution was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. From Richmond, Virginia, it is reported that large quantities of nitrates believed to be for the Sino-Japanese war were loaded early in February on to three ships at the wharf of the Atmospheric Nitrogen Co., at Hopeswell, and Japanese, British, German and French boats were reported as being loaded and chartered for the same purpose (the Stock Market reported a rise in stocks for munitions of war).

It is also interesting to note that the Christy tank, described as one of the most deadly of war weapons, invented by an American, was sold to the U.S.A. War Department and also to Japan; so that in case of a conflict this American weapon will kill American boys. The total prohibition of private manufacture and trade in arms is perhaps the only way to stop profiteering in blood and to take away this great incentive to warmongering.

MARY SHEEPSHANKS,
Hon. Sec. Women's International League.

53 Gower Street, W.C.1.

HOW TO STOP WAR

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—My previous letter was really a protest against the easy way some earnest folk have of settling difficult matters. Mr. Durand has now asked me a question on a broader issue.

The job of organising Trade Unionists for any purpose is their own. The opponents of war may help in propagating the principles of internationalism, but the Trade Union movement itself must decide how and when those principles should be translated into action so far as action by that movement is concerned. Whether the Trade Union movement should be organised for the purpose of stopping war is not easily answered. Organisation is only likely to succeed when there is strong moral indignation against war throughout the whole movement. It would not be difficult for a determined Government to side-track Trade Union action in the event of war, or at least to adopt a tactic which would make effective action very difficult. In any case, inside the Trade Union movement it is desirable to create a spirit of war resistance, an attitude which regards all war as wrong and which leads men, as an organised force, to refuse to help it forward or to participate in it in any way.

If the Trade Union movement attempted to frustrate the will of a Government in the matter of war, I do not regard this as inconsistent with political democracy. At the same time, it should be appreciated that Trade Unionists are also citizens with political rights, and it is more important that they should prevent war by the right use of their political power than by the use of their industrial power. A. CREECH JONES.

Transport House, S.W.1.

GALLOP

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your issue of the 19th March, a review of my recently published book, *Gallop*, contains the statement that "any Germans who appear in the story are either cads or cowards."

With one single deliberate exception necessary for the development of the story this statement is wholly untrue and gives an entirely false impression of the character of the book.

JOHN RESSICH.

58 Park Mansions, Knightsbridge, S.W.1.
April 4th.

RE SIR WILLIAM WHEAT

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Might I suggest a psychological explanation of the attitude of Sir William Wheat. There is a wise old village tag, based on long experience, that says: "A man who's drunk and knows he's drunk, isn't drunk." Now Sir William is only a baronet, but he's got above his station: he's as drunk as a lord. As a result he does not know that he is drunk, and when he sees that everything is wobbling and muddled, he thinks it is of the nature of things; it is not due to his own inebriation.

The Severals, Seer Green. MONTAGUE FORDHAM.

Miscellany

OTHELLO

IT is difficult for a critic not to be unduly severe when an actor of genuine talent is cast for a great part for which he is physically and temperamentally unfitted. Mr. Ernest Milton has neither the voice nor the personality which are absolutely necessary to acting Othello impressively, and the pains and ingenuity which he has employed in his interpretation cannot make up for these natural deficiencies. The result is that the noble and lion-like quality of Othello disappears from the play, and what we are given instead is a frail, tense Oriental, of apparently Hebrew rather than Moorish extraction, whom it seems more natural to imagine attaining eminence through brains and cunning than through a splendid virile audacity.

No careful dignity of pose at moments can compensate for that lack of force which on the stage is transmitted by the body, voice and movements of the actor. Mr. Ernest Milton endeavours to move slowly after the manner of a man who imposes himself by virtue of a reserve force of tremendous power, but for purely physical reasons he is unable to ape the gestures of one whose undisturbed confidence in himself is the result of a natural ascendancy over men. Consequently, the scenes in which Othello's confident serenity is undermined tend to be more hysterical than formidable; and even a deprecating note creeps into the famous speech before the Duke and Senators of Venice.

There is a contradiction between Othello's behaviour and the descriptions of him in the play which can only be reconciled by the emotional force with which the part is played. Othello describes himself as one not easily jealous; Ludovico speaks of him as a nature whom passion could not shake, and Iago finds Othello's anger particularly ominous because he is apparently so seldom angry—"There is matter in it, indeed, if he be angry"; and in the earlier scene in Cyprus he appears as one who dominates others by a soldierly self-command. Yet no sooner does the story get under way than Othello is shown as not only morbidly quick to suspect but unboundedly credulous. Everything now depends upon our complete absorption in Othello's emotions at the moment, in the violent sensuality which is latent in his nature, and in the devilish ingenuity with which Iago conjures it to the surface. The scene is, of course, one of the most notable triumphs of dramatic art. Much, too, necessarily depends upon Iago. We must be able to follow every turn of his ingenious malignity, and here Mr. Henry Oscar stood us in good stead. His Iago is *not* imaginative, but it is sound and realistic. He acts quietly, and without emphasis upon what Coleridge, in a false diagnosis, described as Iago's "motiveless malignity." (Shakespeare was careful to supply Iago with several motives, though none by itself sufficient to explain his conduct apart from an intrinsically evil disposition—"Out of her own goodness I will make that net that shall ensnare them all".) By small gestures such as passing a finger across his lips, by unexaggerated expressions of simulated surprise and concern, he succeeded in being the most convincing Iago that I have seen. On its own level it was a quite admirable performance.

Miss Lydia Sherwood was an adequate, charming Desdemona, and at moments better than adequate. Desdemona is not a difficult part until the play reaches its last act, when a great emotional actress gets her chance; but it is a chance so difficult to make the most of that I have never seen an actress rise to it. The innovation in the bedroom scene of discovering Othello gazing out of the window did not strike me as a happy one. All the great Othellos, from Salvini downwards, have made much of Othello's entry. It struck me, too, as pointless that Othello, instead of falling across Desdemona's bed, preferred to roll down three steps of the dais, when there is a direct in-

struction in Ludovico's last speech when he turns to Iago and says,

> Look on the tragic loading of this bed :
> This is thy work—the object poisons sight.

The conclusion of the scene after Othello's death must be played with much greater rapidity if it is not to leave behind a sensation of flatness.

Miss Athene Seyler played the part of Emilia with spirit. Her gestures were conventional but appropriate, but it would have been wiser to omit the passage from her part

> What did thy song bode, lady ?
> Hark, canst thou hear me ? I will play the swan,
> And die in music : willow, willow, willow (*singing*),

if more is not made of it than was made on the stage of St. James's Theatre. The words indicate that Emilia has crawled, after being stabbed, to where Desdemona lies and is whispering in her ear. They are pointless and unconvincing if they are spoken from another corner of the room where Emilia has fallen after being stabbed.

Mr. Nicholas Hannen is in many respects a satisfactory Cassio, but if anything he over-acts the stupidity of that officer, who, after all, was thought fit to succeed Othello in command. He played the drunken scene well, and was throughout unmistakably a good fellow, but he over-acted, almost to the point of repeating a drunken scene, when Iago reminded him of Bianca's infatuation for him in order to inflame still further Othello's suspicions.

DESMOND MACCARTHY.

MUSICAL COMEDIES

THE "talkie" during these last two years has been developing more or less into a new form of musical comedy. This, I think, may be accepted as a very rough-and-ready truth. M. Clair has carried the day, and his imitators will have a very good run for their money. The mob is already beginning to clamour for a large supply of musical comedies, and as an inevitable corollary the advanced people (including M. Clair himself) are already beginning to say that they are out of date. "We must get on to something new," and for the moment that something new is *Mädchen in Uniform*, soon to be seen at the Academy.

I am quite glad to get on to something new, but am not for this reason willing to concede that musical comedies are out of date. The sound-ballet film seems to me to provide many of the requirements essential to a good picture. It ensures continual movement, unimpeded by the checks of direct speech. It is easy to find a convention sufficient to carry you through one picture. The whole mood of the picture can be hung round what is called a rhythm or tempo provided by the sound accompaniment. By destroying naturalism you can vary your speeds to infinity. Variation of speed was the victory gained by the silent film. It was destroyed by the "talkie" and has been recaptured by the sound film.

Two recent sound films, *Monte Carlo Madness* and *Good Night, Vienna!* are failures, though the former has the name of Pommer attached to it. The sound film has been such a recent invention that it comes as a shock to find a commonplace version of it already thrown on to the market. Yet so it is, and before long we shall have hundreds of commonplace sound-films hurled at our heads. Clair has his imitators hard at work in all the Elstrees of the world.

But these two films are failures for different reasons. The director of *Monte Carlo Madness* put the cart before the horse. He thought of a very good "chorus," if you like the term, a Ruritanian cruiser with a Ruritanian crew, who set a very good tempo for a film that never emerged. The business opens admirably and the play is always as gay as may be, when the chorus is there to enliven us. But, unfortunately, the director had thought of nothing to fill up the intervals. Most of *Monte Carlo Madness* is little more than an ordinary talkie of a quite uninspired order ; though the director perhaps hoped to save the situation by a very good sequence of Monte Carlo emptying itself as a Ruritanian cannon is pointed from the cruiser on to the hotels. But he is unsuccessful, as his picture is without form and hence void. There was no general rhythm to carry the thing through.

Still, you could have guessed that, though *Monte Carlo Madness* is a failure, Pommer knows what he is about. You would hardly deduce from *Good Night, Vienna!* that the director had thought out the least bit where he was going. The picture is very inferior to *Sunshine Susie*. Though dressed up as a sound-film, *Good Night, Vienna!* is really no more than an ordinary screen play with a vague musical noise going on at the back. Of course, there is a theme song of sorts, but there is no successful attempt to make the sound accompaniment set the tempo for the whole picture and give it a mood. The comedy of incongruous speeds, which is at the roots of sound comedy, was only once amusingly used—when an angry parent quarrels with his telephone to the tune of a musical party in his son's rooms. For about five minutes the director brought off an effect of his own. Too much time, also, was spent trying to remember from exactly which old film the director was cribbing any particular sequence. *Good Night, Vienna!* is disappointing, not because it is a failure—this might happen to anybody or anything—but because it never tries to be a success.

It is, however, most interesting for the sociological significance of the first sequence. In *Kameradschaft* some miners were heavily censored for taking a shower bath, of which they stood in great need. In *Good Night, Vienna!* Mr. Jack Buchanan and his gay colleagues of the Imperial Guard are seen similarly engaged, for no purpose that I could see save to show off their excellent figures, which they do to very good effect. We now know exactly how much of the male figure (almost all of it) may be exposed to the Board of Censors before the Board begins to show symptoms of moral distress. We may also marvel at the different nervous and intellectual apparatus of the Board and ourselves. Had I been a stiff puritan I should have passed the *Kameradschaft* sequence and censored that of *Good Night, Vienna!* For I cannot think that the steamy bodies of a few miners in a huge bathing shed would have induced in the female section of the audience the hushed gigglement and expectancy occasioned by the gradually increasing nudity of Mr. Jack Buchanan. But perhaps the Board considers that the proper function of the human form is to cause gigglement. And that is a point of view, like any other.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Edith Evans in "Twelfth Night"

TWELFTH NIGHT at the Old Vic, if it lacked shape and, as to the fooling, *finesse*, provided an opportunity to see Miss Evans in a new part. Some may object that her face could never be Viola's face ; or that memories of *Marriage à la Mode* rose up to rebuke her less captivating, because simpler, lover's sighs for Orsino. But to my eyes, at least, she expressed the very character of the play. Robust, romantic, delightfully approachable, her acting introduced, as well as the sentimental, the intimate and the comic elements which were lacking where one would most naturally have looked for them. Sebastian's stage sparkle and Orsino's dim grin failed altogether to be charming ; and the less said about Sir Toby and Malvolio the better. The performance, in spite of its weaknesses, had a carefree mobility which carried the audience most of the way. Mr. Robert Harris made a winning Feste : Maria (Miss Mary Russell) was excellent both as to looks and acting, and Miss Phyllis Thomas made a distinct

success of the difficult part of Olivia, the principal character who has so very little to do.

Retribution

When Gideon Sarn took over his father's sins and his father's farm he was an unimaginative, unattractive, greedy young man; as portrayed by Mr. Robert Donat in *Precious Bane*, at St. Martin's, he remains this to the end. Mr. Donat's performance has force, intellect and the savage beauty that comes from baffled desire, but it lacks imaginative fusion. Not for this Gideon would Prue have worked seven years. Miss Ffrangcon Davies' Prue was lovely, a shade too pathetic perhaps, though in the last act she displays the power which Mary Webb gave her in the novel. Her dashes across the stage to the door were miracles of movement; no actress is better to-day at using her whole body when she moves. Mr. Sebastian Shaw's Kester was a fine match for her. His acting conveyed with a rare simplicity and sincerity the tenderness, the sweet obstinacy of the weaver; and when he is angry at Sarn's hideous selfishness, his anger was true and terrible. The parts of Jancis and her father, Beguildy, were given the proper old-fashioned patina by Miss Harker and Mr. Malcolm Keen. Occasionally there is an unfortunate suggestion of the pantomime demon in Mr. Keen's histrionics. The setting and production of the piece are unusually good; and Mr. Lewis' dramatisation of the novel is masterly.

A Doctor as Drug

Doctor Pygmalion was a student of psychology of the very simplest sort. The only thing that is wrong with most women, he maintained, is their husbands, and to these he himself was always prepared to act as an antidote. So when he was called in, to prescribe for Lucy Haydon (Miss Gladys Cooper), suffering from a chronic, unnamed malady, he ordered champagne every day, Paris once a month, and told her that he was madly in love with her. The cure worked miraculously, as it always did, and in six months' time she was bursting with health and fascination; strings of suitors begged for her hand and even her husband fell in love with her—which, as it turned out (in the one really poor scene in the play) that she had been devoted to him all the time, was thoroughly satisfactory for everyone, except the Doctor, who, for once, found himself out-drugged. Out of these elements of simple fun Mr. Owen has succeeded in producing a really amusing play in *Dr. Pygmalion* at the Playhouse. That a wife as charming as Miss Cooper makes her, even at her most pale and pettish in the first scene, could ever have lost her husband through inability to use the wide array of weapons at her command is obviously absurd; while the husband of Edmond Breon, with his chubby selfishness and affability, is one of the few men we cannot credit falling a serious victim to her charms, but such weaknesses of probability are more than atoned for by the lively and entertaining dialogue pleasantly full of the neat little surprises that turn a joke from a smiling into a laughing matter. After Miss Cooper, who leads a very competent company, chief praise must go to Ronald Squire for his perfectly charming Doctor, the insidious fascination of whose collected rudeness he made us so amply appreciate.

A Gangster Skit

Innocents of Chicago (a British film at the Regal) is quite amusing, but is disappointing because it is not more amusing still. The picture is a skit on gangster films of Chicago, the hero being an absolutely simple young man from England, who triumphs by sheer simplicity, even by sheer inanity of character. The film loses by not being sufficiently fantastic. It is often, in fact, too like an ordinary bad gangster film. "We've seen all this before," we say, and are not particularly amused by the American slang, which has been inserted to raise a laugh, but which is too familiar to the regular film-goer to be very comic in itself. "Yeah" now seems to me just as much a word as "oui" or "ja." The last ten minutes, however, which are given over to large-scale massacre, have the quality of full-blooded exaggeration lacking in the early part of the story. All the way through there are entertaining shots and streaks of dialogue, but one feels a lack of high spirits, and an assumption that gangster films are ridiculous in themselves. Still, *Innocents of Chicago* is quite a tolerable entertainment, which will appeal particularly to anyone foolish enough to be revolted by the mere fact of American speech.

English Furnishings

The publication of Mr. Paul Nash's *The Room and the Book* (Soncino Press. 6s.) is the occasion for the opening of an exhibition of modern English furniture and furnishings at the Zwemmer Gallery. The larger pieces deviate little from Continental precedent, except that some of the steel and upholstery chairs have a pleasantly informal air; so has a dining-table by Curtis Moffat, and Gordon Russell's quaint yew-wood book-table is reminiscent of ancient country schoolrooms and church-pews. Mr. Russell also shows a walnut bookcase, receding from bottom to top so that the little books get their rights. Among rugs there are a McKnight Kauffer and a lovely design in grey, blue and geranium-pink by Marion Dorn; and among textiles, which are certainly worth inspection, a demure silk "Sprigs" by Elspeth Little, and a cotton by Enid Marx which combines the chiaroscuric beauty of leopard with the lightness more natural to silk. Potters are represented by Bernard Leach and Staite Murray; painters by Paul Nash, Edward Wadsworth, John Armstrong, John Bigge and members of the Seven and Five Group. Pattern papers, hand-stencils and fine printing (by the Curwen Press), doorknockers and handles, tiles, plywood and varieties of glass for lighting, etc., complete the minor exhibits. Among the sculpture a golden frog and a crumpled cow by Gertrude Hermes were friendly, but would not bear contemplation. Figures by Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth have finish and definition, but are disturbing to live with and harp too much on the same note.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Friday, April 8th—
John Hunt, Pianoforte Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.30.
Sir Richard Burn on "Recent Developments in Land Revenue and Rent Policy in the United Provinces," R.S.A., John Street, Adelphi, 4.30.

Saturday, April 9th—
Hugh Campbell, Song Recital, Grotian Hall, 3.15.
India Demonstration. Speakers: F. B. Crozier, Maude Royden and others, Trafalgar Square, 2.15.
Glasgow Orpheus Choir, Queen's Hall, 3 and 8.

Sunday, April 10th—
J. A. Hobson on "The Recording Angel," Conway Hall, 11.
Mark Hambourg, The Palladium, 3.15.
London Symphony Orchestra, Albert Hall, 3.
"Red Triangle," Savoy.
"Ninth Revel," Arts.

Tuesday, April 12th—
Wolf von Dewall on "The Place of Germany in Europe To-day," Friends House, 1.20.

Wednesday, April 13th—
J. R. I. Brooke on "Rural Industries," R.S.A., John Street, Adelphi, 8.
"Bewitched," Arts.
Pleasure Garden, Gate.
B.B.C. Symphony Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

Thursday, April 14th—
"The Dubarry," His Majesty's.
"The Hundred Days," New.
"Scott of Abbotsford," Lyric Theatre, Glasgow.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE comfort which many secure by reading about desperate criminals is like the warm satisfaction that they derive from reading stories of perilous adventure. There is the sense that the reader is better off than those of whom he is learning, and there is, more profound and more satisfying, the sense that he is accomplishing vicariously the feats of these daring bravoes. He believes that it is only lack of desire and opportunity that keeps him from practical emulation of the hardier criminal, or more positively that he has a virtue which preserves him from the wickedness of these others. To-day the reader of stories of crime also flatters himself that he is comparable to the detective, and enjoys putting himself in the place of Poirot or Mr. Fortune, Father Brown or Dr. Thorndyke. The earlier stories of crime paid scant attention to the skill of the detective. They were almost entirely concerned with making examples of the criminals whose horrid deeds were related, with deploring these wretches' abandoned conduct, and with issuing warnings to all who might be tempted to think a life of crime was a jolly one. The fashion, so vehemently pilloried by Thackeray in *Catherine*—a tale whose brutality has made most people ignore its extreme narrative skill—for making heroes of criminals was a by-product of Rousseauism. Before *Caleb Williams* there was very little effort to indict society for its share in the making of the criminal; though there is healthy human pity in De Foe and Gay, too many of the books which dealt specifically with crime were deplorably smug and grossly un-Christian in their attitude to those who were in prison.

* * *

Of this smugness will be found many examples in the once-famous *Newgate Calendar*, though there is also in that compilation a more generous spirit, even if it be expressed in rather condescending, didactic manner. Mr. B. Laurie has selected from it a series "of those trials which are sure to interest the present-day reader." Unfortunately his book, called by the traditional title *The Newgate Calendar or Malefactors' Bloody Register* (Laurie. 8s. 6d.), has no introduction or notes, which any reprint of the old work sadly needs; Mr. Laurie has, however, left the narratives in all their glib self-satisfaction and has also reproduced a number of the old rude cuts. It would, however, have been of interest to know how many hands were engaged in the original work, for there are signs in the text of the narratives that the book had more than one author. For instance, the author of the story of *George Cock, executed for private stealing*, is a more humane man than the gentleman who writes of *McCanneley and Morgan*, executed for burglary. Indeed, the narrative of Cock's history blames not only the thief but his first master.

> At an early time of life Cock manifested a strong propensity to vicious courses; but it does not thence follow that he was irreclaimable. When he absconded during his apprenticeship, it became a duty incumbent on his master to pursue every possible means for inducing his return; for by exerting a lawful authority over him, or by the more gentle method of appealing to his reason, representing the ill consequences naturally resulting from dissolute courses, and the certain happiness attending a life regulated by the dictates of virtue, it is probable that he might have effected an entire reformation in his conduct. It is, at all events, beyond dispute, that the master was deserving very severe reprehension for shamefully neglecting all endeavours to avert the ruin of a youth committed entirely to his protection. When a man takes an apprentice let him consider that he has a more important duty to fulfil than that of merely instructing him in the method of earning a livelihood; that he becomes the guardian of his morals, and that he must incur a heavy weight of guilt if he suffers them to be corrupted through his inattention or example.

* * *

The most harmful thing in the *Newgate Calendar* is not the description of crimes—the narratives are very reticent compared with the modern thriller—it is the assumption throughout the tales that most of the offenders are monsters. I think that the popularity of the collection must have been largely responsible for the evolution of the Satanic hero who culminates in Byron's theatrical, self-tortured, self-indulgent hero-villains. The more ignorant readers of the *Newgate Calendar* may have been often terrified at the characters' bloody ends, disgusted at the level on which their lives were lived, moved possibly by the pious injunctions and warnings that diversify the narrative, but they must have seen nearly all these wretched criminals as more than life-size, as persons who surpassed the dull standards of the ordinary man. The truth, obvious enough to the educated reader, is that they all fell below the ordinary human weakness; it is their stupidity, their deplorable lack of sensitiveness, their strange and dreary preoccupation with self, their extravagent, humourless vanity, their astounding self-confidence which strike us. Many of the minor offenders—harlots who were hanged for "privately stealing"—were not so stupid as the murderers and violent robbers; they were people who simply did not believe in working if they could get a living otherwise, and were, it would seem, inspired to a strange recklessness by the knowledge that theft—as was forgery, arson, and many other offences—was a capital crime. We find in this collection, put with commendable frankness, the classic excuse for the bloody penal system of that time.

> There are those who censure the laws of these kingdoms as being of too sanguinary a complexion. Be it admitted that there is something extremely dreadful in the idea of depriving a fellow-creature of existence at a time when the weight of his sins is sufficient, without the Divine assistance, to sink him into everlasting perdition; but as partial favour must always give way to considerations for the public good, it should be remembered that the lives of individuals are not sacrificed so much for the sake of punishing them for the offences of which they have been guilty, as with a view of making them examples for the discontinuance of vice. Justice may for a time be eluded, and no inconvenience may have been sustained by the injured party, who, though entertaining no private animosity, nay, even tenderly compassionating the offender, will be induced, by his regard to the public, to enforce the law. How dangerous, then, must be the situation of those who have been guilty of acts of delinquency! The dread of a violent and disgraceful death, together with all the horrors of conscious guilt, must continually rush upon their minds, and render them miserable beyond the power of expression.

Smugness of this kind, hand in hand with the barbarous cruelty of the law, must have been responsible for the arrival, in the next century, of the sympathetic criminals of Lytton and Ainsworth.

* * *

For those who like crime, but dislike blugginess, let me recommend *The Baccarat Case* (Hodge, 10s. 6d.). For eight days in June, 1891, before the Lord Chief Justice and a jury, Sir Edward Clarke (Solicitor-General), Mr. C. F. Gill, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. H. H. Asquith, Mr. Charles W. Mathews, Mr. Arthur Russell and Mr. Henry L. Lopes, argued whether Sir William Gordon-Cumming had or had not cheated at cards. The great excitement caused by the case was due to the fact that the Prince of Wales was one of the house-party where the alleged cheating happened. The action was one for slander brought by Gordon-Cumming against several of his friends; the jury found against him. Mr. Teignmouth Shore, who edited this volume, believed Gordon-Cumming was innocent. After reading the account of the trial, I am still in the dark; a good deal of the evidence seems to suggest that there was a certain animosity against Gordon-Cumming, in whose innocence not only his counsel Sir Edward Clarke, but so shrewd a man of the world as Henry Labouchere firmly believed. Not the least interest of this trial is the picture it gives of an England incredibly leisured, and of England when money was definitely insisting on social recognition, content no longer with its sound position in the City of London.

RICHARD SUNNE.

NEW NOVELS

Amos the Wanderer. By W. B. MAXWELL. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Sons of Singerman. By MYRON BRINIG. Cobden-Sanderson. 7s. 6d.

Summer's Night. By SYLVIA THOMPSON. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

A Day's Tale. By LEWIS GIBBS. Dent. 7s. 6d.

New Heaven, New Earth. By PHOEBE FENWICK GAYE. Secker. 7s. 6d.

Country Air. By GUY RAWLENCE. Constable. 7s. 6d.

Himself. By HAZEL MURPHY. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

Family with Parents. By JEAN RUDD. Philip Allan. 7s. 6d.

Any other formula for novel-writing than that of being clever is almost lost sight of when cleverness particularly abounds. The great qualification, for purposes of fiction, of a slight, genuine and determined stupidity might easily be overlooked by the thoughtless, who, however, not otherwise than by its means could experience in their reading the pleasures of indolence and ease and an indulgent condescension. Mr. Maxwell's new book qualifies to some extent for that claim on his reader's gratitude. For how much the reader will enjoy assuming a mildly amused superiority to a writer who puts such sentiments as these into the mouth of his upstanding young hero:

> "You have borne the King's Commission. Isn't that enough for anybody?"
>
> "In theory perhaps yes, but in practice I'm afraid not," and Amos laughed good-humouredly. "After all, it was only *temporarily* that we had the honour. It was quite right while it lasted. Really and truly a sort of brotherhood. Rather like Freemasonry. . . . Our brother-officers were splendid to us fellows in the war. but they would be startled, perhaps disgusted too, if we tried to resume old familiarity—or put forward claims from a state of affairs that no longer exists."

Or what an utter luxury of laziness it will be in the reader to pretend that this story of Amos Bentley's career has a real conviction about it. And how pleasant to beguile one's commonsense into believing that Amos's great campaign for reviving the industry of making trugs in his part of the country, and for warding off the railway that was considered a threat to the rusticity of the villages, was a practical and promising affair. And in reclining on the lap of this luxury of pretence the reader will find even a touch of hardness here and there in case the idleness and ease should pall. There is the rigour of a good idea in making Amos, who plans to roam the world, get no farther than the next village, where he is embroiled in one local affair after another, whereas the love-sick girl he has left behind him to rusticate miserably does actually slip off to foreign parts. But into what a state of utter laziness will the reader recline finally when, to turn the tables more completely, this singularly colourless young woman returns "famous" for her travel-books. One's wits may sleep while one absorbs that fame; but on the whole the relaxation is a very pleasant one.

Sons of Singerman, Myron Brinig's far more ambitious book, in which the story of the Jewish family of Singerman is brought up to date, does not, either, need the reader to be agog with a lifelike alertness. For here, too, there is that remitting presence of a pretence not quite clever enough to seem real. For the purposes of this book, which is another tract of present-day Judaism, you must pretend that the Jew of to-day in America is a neurotic, effete and dying creature, and that Gentiles are a race of fair, strong athletes. To take the stranded, scattered, half-reviled position of Judaism as a race and to give it a personal exemplification in all these sons of Singerman, and in their sons in their turn, involves leaving the actuality of life slightly to one side. There is an author and book-making comfortably interposed between you and that actuality of which the new novelist in his numbers has the trick of catching the very accent. But what an absorbing and various piece of book-making Myron Brinig can produce! It is true he can be felt to goad his subject with a sometimes simulated passion; and that he whips up his observations to a meaningless frenzy so that he can even write of a building: "It was a fine store, built of Montana sandstone. . . . The edifice possessed the dignity of a white-haired queen squatting in the heart and centre of a copper turbulence"; or of an overfed woman: "When she walked her stomach preceded her as though she were pregnant with the moon"—such extravagances acting as shouts to the reader to beware of the book's general overstatement. But if in the story of these declinedly Jewish sons of Singerman and their wives, and their children escaping still further by tragedy or determination or indifference from their Jewishness actuality is spoilt by too much intention to make out a case, there is at any rate an absorbing piece of fiction.

In *Summer's Night* the different races are the rich and the not-so-rich. Miss Thompson makes one have doubts, at first, as to the discrimination of her detail: she thinks, for instance, to give reality to the selling of Melcombe, the Bitternes's ancestral home, to the manufacturing parvenu, Lord Whichford, by reproducing the perfunctory correspondence exchanged by the parties on the subject. Here the letter killeth indeed. But it is not long before detail, coming to the telling and exquisite moments of a young passion, is well embarked on a very delicate and understanding study of a young man and woman—she the daughter of the parvenu, he the artist-son of the impoverished ancestral home. Though the marriage of these two seems to afford a conventional mitigation of the economic changes, it sets up intangible problems of its own that the reader cannot doubt. Miss Thompson's dialogue is reduced acceptably to a brief modern note of sharpness and wit; her descriptions are subtle—as in that of the contempt of a strong-charactered girl for the weak unhappy one visited in bed: "this visible exhaustion (ameliorated by breakfasting in bed), this nursing of nothing more touching than—a sick character." She has, indeed, a distinct place among younger novelists; she possesses something more than the power cleverly to reflect her time; she is moved by beauty in too positive a sense merely to depict its absence; and these young lovers in their happiness and later in their married estrangement are certainly figures of beauty.

But Mr. Lewis Gibbs is one of the clever ones, and of the brand that only asks to establish that all is despair. It was a bold talent that prompted him to make the portrait of a day. With such a mobile sitter sprawling in all directions, what could he do after all but, by arbitrarily leaping from here to there, trust to convey an idea of mammoth proportions? If Mr. Gibbs had more normally concentrated on his school-boy or his school-masters, or one of his ageing, dissatisfied wives, or his mortally ill man, or his suicide, or his nameless vignetted characters, or if he had more normally co-ordinated them, the day would have spread itself around them, instead of violently escaping on every hand. "At this time, about half a mile away, Mr. Crompton was . . ." "Meanwhile hundreds of trains brought huge cargoes of humanity. . . ." "At this moment a charwoman was polishing another floor. . . ." Thus (and with an occasional glance at the weather in the Atlantic) is the day supposed to be drawn into the net. The result is so many separate spots of rain and fog and human ignominy and dissatisfaction fixed with a lynx eye

Miss Fenwick Gaye also picks up an arbitrary person here and there, and collects them, for better inspection, on an Atlantic liner. A great opportunity, this, for the world to sit for its miniature; and the liner not only excuses but demands the chance assortment of the company. But Miss Gaye's wives and spinsters, her mortally ill and suicide are, in a mild version, meant for the reader who is glad to rest on a little pretence. And so is *Country Air*. The young writer who intended to pillory Victorianism in a novel, and rented a country vicarage in order to wallow in his subject, finds himself sufficiently impressed by his surroundings to tear up his begun MS., though not sufficiently to sever him from his own undesirable world. "'If I might suggest, Sir," says Mrs. Trust of the Victorian vicarage, "that we had the vases filled with gypsophila, sweet peas and cornflowers, I think it would look a treat." "I think it would, Mrs. Trust," Robin said gravely'—and that "gravely" will surely indicate the ingenuousness of this would-be sophisticated tale. *Himself* is a story that can be enjoyed not so much for its grim picture of a rough Irish farmer and his lustful, murderous passion for a tinker's girl—a theme that does not develop so interestingly as the beginning promises—as for its characteristic Irish note of poverty and strangeness and the charm of its unexaggerated native idiom.

As *Family With Parents* pretends to describe the lives of the six daughters of Mamma and Papa Bayliss (American), it arouses expectations of the resourcefulness of an author so unafraid of a large family. But as a matter of fact not sixteen nor sixty daughters—had the Bayliss family run to it—need have affrighted Miss Rudd, with her method of treating them. They are all meant to exemplify the hardship for women of the home-making that interferes with their more individual ambitions; and the

problem is stated thus in the case of the long-married Spenny and her husband :

> " Warren," she sat down in a chair that stood against the wall. Five paces between them. " I'm going to sing." He looked up at her. She watched him, watched the colour drain out of his face, watched lines creep in, muscles droop in defeat, watched his eyes fill slowly with jealous rage. " Rushlam heard my voice to-day, and I'm going to sing Mélisande on the fifteenth. Just one night. . . ." Warren got up from his chair and towered over her. She could feel his strength pouring out towards her, trying to envelop her, to hold her, to keep her—his woman—for himself.

Other members of the family supply improbable instances of the same theme, in staccato prose : " Think. That's what she wanted to do. Think. Been refusing to all these weeks. Been afraid to think. Afraid ! " And one suspects the existence of a rollicking humour in the matter of an adoption :

> " He's adopted a couple of brats ! "
> Spenny could not help it. She leant back in her chair and laughed.
> " I don't see anything funny about it," wailed Ruth. " He came in the other night when I had guests for dinner, and he walked into the drawing-room with those messy dribbling babies in his arms. It was perfectly ghastly."
> " Oh—oh—oh," Spenny waved a feeble hand at Ruth. " Don't —it—hurts so—to—laugh—like this."

But not in one's idlest moment can one share the joke.

VIOLA MEYNELL.

THREE AMERICANS

Theodore Roosevelt. By HENRY F. PRINGLE. Cape. 18s.

Woodrow Wilson : Life and Letters. Vols. III and IV. 1910-1914. By RAY STANNARD BAKER. Heinemann. 12s. 6d. each.

Crowded Years. The Reminiscences of William G. McAdoo. Cape. 21s.

In spite of the tone of sarcastic superiority in which it is written, *Theodore Roosevelt* is a useful book. It is well documented, and it gives conclusive proof of the mediocrity of Roosevelt, a man whose only greatness lay in the forcefulness and appeal of his personality. Although none of the keen judges of character who knew, and admired, Roosevelt (such as Henry Adams, John Hay, John Morley, and James Bryce) were taken in by him even during his lifetime, nevertheless the political legend of his greatness has persisted. Presumably it will be destroyed by this book. Mr. Pringle shows that Roosevelt was unusually vague in his information, and that he thought with unusual woolliness, even for a politician. In 1891 he grossly misstated the recent record of his own party on the major issue of bi-metallism ; and in 1896, when he was opposing Bryan's plea for the unlimited coinage of depreciated silver, he advanced the bizarre theory that " free silver " would not be so harmful to the wealthy man who had credit and who paid his bills by cheque, but that the poor man, who used cash, was the person who would be hardest hit ! And in 1884 he had opposed a bill establishing the twelve-hour day for tram-workers on the ground that it was " purely socialistic " and that men who asked to be coddled by law were unworthy of their sex. . . . Mr. Pringle also convicts Roosevelt of cheap, sabre-rattling jingoism. During the dispute with England over the Venezuela boundary, in 1895, he was eager for war to come. " Canada would surely be conquered," he told a reporter, " and once wrested from England it would never be restored." And he wrote to Henry Cabot Lodge, " This country needs a war." In 1897, when Roosevelt was Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Representative Butler wrote from Washington, " Roosevelt came down here looking for war. He did not care whom we fought as long as there was a scrap." In the same year, in a public address, Roosevelt stated that " no triumph of peace is quite so great as the supreme triumphs of war . . . The diplomat is the servant, not the master of the soldier." And in 1898, when the United States battleship *Maine* blew up and sank in Havana harbour (nobody knew from what cause), and while Captain Sigsbee, the officer who had been in command, was urging Americans to suspend judgment, Roosevelt at once decided that " the *Maine* was sunk as an act of dirty treachery on the part of the Spaniards." These are but a few items in the record that convicts Roosevelt of adolescent emotionalism in questions of war and peace. His actions were not those of a strong man defending what is right, but of a weak man pretending to be strong.

Roosevelt's reputation rests chiefly on the myth that he protected the people from the depredations of Big Business. Actually, the record shows that he compromised fatally on this issue. He interfered with the development of the trusts, so that they could not offer the people the benefits that might have come from really large-scale combinations ; but he did not control them sufficiently either to re-establish free competition or to break their power for corrupting the legislatures of the country. In other words, he secured the worst of both worlds.

It is impossible to read Roosevelt's life without being reminded of the ex-Kaiser, or to read Wilson's life without being reminded of Gladstone. The two new volumes of Mr. Baker's *Woodrow Wilson* cover the years from 1910, when Wilson was elected Governor of New Jersey, until the summer of 1914, when he had completed the first amazing sixteen months of his presidency. Among the tragedies of Wilson's life, one of the saddest is that the pre-war period of his presidency was swamped by the great events that followed. It was not only washed out of the public memory (a misfortune for which history will atone), but most of its great achievements were completely washed out as well, for Wilson never had a chance to consolidate them. There has been no other such year and a quarter in the history of the American presidency. A reformer had been elected, and he proved a practical leader who believed in the reforms that he had promised. A radical lowering of the tariff, a radical reorganisation of the country's banking system, anti-trust laws that had force, the repeal of the discrimination in favour of American vessels in the Panama canal tolls, the payment of $25,000,000 to Colombia as reparation for Roosevelt's theft of Panama—all these measures were forced on a startled Congress, and all except the last were forced through. Then came the war, and the passions and the profiteering that were aroused killed the interest in good government for its own sake that Wilson had created throughout the country. His great days were over. When the United States joined the war he knew the brief and easy popularity of a war-President—and then the tragic end. But his chance to renew the world's faith in democratic government was gone by August, 1914.

The story of Wilson's struggle to secure tariff-reduction should interest English readers. When he began his fight, in 1913, the high-tariff lobbyists had never yet been defeated at Washington. There had been no general reduction of the rates since 1857. Wilson defeated the lobbying by creating public indignation against it, and he drove the special pleaders out of employment. Someone likened the result to the process of washing a dog : " The fleas are entirely opposed to it," he said. " The dog does not like it much, either, but will be more comfortable himself afterwards, and immeasurably more agreeable as a member of the family." It is sad to reflect that the fleas are all back again to-day, and there is no Wilson to wash them off.

Wilson's enemies say that even if he had been granted eight years of peaceful administration he could never have done more than he had already done in his first sixteen months. They point out that his career consists of magnificent beginnings, followed by failure and personal recriminations. It is true that this is what happened when he was President of Princeton University, and again (though not so strikingly) when he was Governor of New Jersey. Perhaps it would have happened at Washington also ; for Wilson, though strong as a leader of public opinion, was less successful as a leader of his colleagues. He was inclined to confuse opposition with treachery, and to become overbearing. Also, he never surrounded himself with first-class men. The terrible price that he (and the world) paid for these weaknesses will be one of the themes in the future volumes of Mr. Baker's biography, a work that is written without charm, but with fairness and intelligence and with exhaustive knowledge of the subject.

Mr. William McAdoo, Wilson's Secretary of the Treasury, was one of the men who helped to create the Federal Reserve Act, which is almost the only Wilsonian reform that has endured. Later, Mr. McAdoo (who had married one of Wilson's daughters) became a rival of Mr. Al Smith for the leadership of the Democratic Party. *Crowded Years* is the story of his life down to 1919—an eventful story, and one which is of use to the historian, but not of much interest to the general reader. Mr. McAdoo has a dry, bare mind.

Toward the end of the book there is a section on war debts which is interesting and which should do considerable harm. To begin with, Mr. McAdoo asserts that America won the war ; in fact, he very nearly asserts that she bought the war. This

contention he backs by quoting from a cable he received from Bonar Law in 1917: "Resources of the United Kingdom, which are available for payments in the United States, are exhausted. Unless the government of the United States can meet fully our expenses in America, including exchange, the entire finance fabric of the alliance will collapse. This conclusion will be a matter of days, not months." Mr. McAdoo's point appears to be that since America won the war the Allies should be only too happy to go on paying her for ever—an argument which is a *non sequitur* based on a false premise. Mr. McAdoo genially admits that while the Allies were borrowing nine and a half billion dollars from the United States they were spending almost twelve billion dollars *in* the United States; he also admits that payment in gold, or in commodities, "involves, apparently, insuperable obstacles." Nevertheless, the debts must be paid, so he revives the suggestion (made by Lord Rothermere in 1919) that England and France might pay part of their debt with West Indian islands—and for the rest, "the United States could afford to accept in settlement stocks and bonds in railways, steamships, telephone and telegraph companies, etc." This is ingenious, not to say absurd.

HERBERT AGAR.

JAPAN

Japan: A Short Cultural History. By G. B. SANSOM. Cresset Press. 30s.

Japan: Some Phases of Her Problems and Development. By DR. I. NITOBE. Benn. 18s.

Any dialogue between a Japanese and a Westerner is apt to remind one, in its later stages, of that immortal disquisition by the Cheshire Cat on the absence of sympathy between its own and the canine temperament. "You see a dog growls when it's angry, and wags its tail when it's pleased. Now *I* growl when I'm pleased and wag my tail when I'm angry." If the feelings of the Japanese have been deeply wounded, he will probably give the resemblance added point by the production of a high-pitched unnerving giggle, accompanied by an extensive and glassy smile. For in trifling, as also in important, matters the antithesis could hardly be more complete. And the gold fillings in the interstices of the nervous grin do little to diminish the effect of strangeness.

An acknowledgment of this fundamental lack of sympathy is a decided step towards an understanding of the Japanese. Sentimental propagandists in the past, by minimising, have tended to exaggerate it. The Japanese legend which they have fostered has been taken over by the Japanese themselves—to serve as a convenient shop-sign. Hence the "impressions" most travellers bring home are as spurious as the bric-à-brac which they accumulate; shabby oddments of European manufacture slightly touched up by Oriental ingenuity.

Mr. Sansom, whose cultural history of Japan is the first work of its kind to appear in England, has not been hampered, like so many previous writers, by an inability to refer to the original sources. Here is a picture of Japanese civilisation, unglazed by the varnish of sentimentality, dispassionate, clear and matter-of-fact. He is neither the apologist nor the aggressor; his enthusiasms are catholic but under control. Indeed, the great value of his book is that it redirects our enthusiasm into new channels. Japan, as admired by a large public, is Japan of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Japan of the prints, the lacquers and ivories; a culture very charming in its way but quite lacking in those principles of creative vigour which elsewhere have commanded our admiration. If this book awakes the interest which it deserves, Japanese studies for the average intelligent reader may take on an almost entirely novel charm; such a reader will turn away from the Yedo period when he discovers the splendid work of a fresher age.

About the middle of the seventh century A.D. Prince Shōtoku was doing for his contemporaries what the statesmen of the Restoration period did for Japan more than a thousand years later. He opened Japan to the outer world—in this instance to the doctrines of Chinese Buddhism—and built the monastery and temple of Hōryūji, still one of the most impressive Buddhist monuments in the whole length and breadth of the Japanese Empire. Here, on the walls of the central building, faded frescoes suggest the richness of Buddhist tradition. Indian and Indo-Greek influences helped to fertilise unexploited native talent; with the result that a civilisation was matured, generally known to English students as the Heian epoch.

Something of the ripened quality of that period may be gathered from Murasaki's massive novel, in the delightful translation of Mr. Waley. It was a time during which the cult of beauty received as much attention from the ruling caste as in latter years they were to devote to the art of war. It collapsed at last—of in-breeding and over-refinement—and gave place to a boisterous feudal period. Once again, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, foreign influences made headway in Japan, when the Jesuit missionaries gained a foothold. But Christianity—it would appear for political reasons—was prohibited and finally stamped out; and the Empire, until the arrival of Perry's warships, slumbered in unbroken self-seclusion.

Implicit in the briefest sketch of Japanese history is a paradox characteristic of the race. This people, the most imitative that can be imagined, is also the most stubbornly conservative. Periodically, there has sprung up on Japanese soil a mania for the acquisition of all things foreign, usually followed by a sharp return of racial consciousness. In which direction Japan is at present swinging it is still far too early to predict. That educated Japanese, or a considerable body of them, are disillusioned with the Western modes they have adopted is more obvious than any solution of their difficulties. Japan, say the Japanese, must go forward, though embogged deeper and deeper at every stride . . . Forward! As a war-cry it may be admirable, but as a destination it is unfortunately somewhat dim. Dr. Nitobe, in his survey of modern developments, sees a Cross at the end of the long road. Other observers, both Japanese and European, see in place of it a hammer-and-sickle flag.

MOOD AND ORACLE

Song and its Fountains. By AE. Macmillan. 5s.

The philosophy of AE has always been bound up with beauty. In his belief, the dominant mood of a man's life is decided at some moment early in childhood, when the psyche which awaits incarnation in the body has achieved this incarnation, and a mood, or central idea, is born of the union. He has been concerned to retrace the steps of his thought until it reaches early

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childhood ; and the fact that, from the first contact of soul and body which he can remember, an intimation of divine beauty was born he now holds to be the reason for his lifelong acceptance of " ideas, philosophies and causes for the beauty they suggested." This being so, we should naturally expect his thought to be preoccupied with form, since an artist must read the universe in terms of his central idea : and we should likewise expect him, as a visionary, to state his conflicts and receive his intuitions in formal guise. This, as those who know his books and pictures are aware, has been the case. AE's problem has been the problem of every honest seer, to decide in what degree the forms seen are from without, and in what degree they are the work of that inner dramatist born at the same hour with his dominant mood. In his early years AE tended, at any rate as an artist, to accept vision at its face value.

> There was always an element of the unexpected in the poetry itself, for it broke in upon and deflected the normal current of consciousness. I would be as surprised at the arising within me of words which in their combination seemed beautiful to me as I would have been if a water-lily had blossomed suddenly from the bottom of a tarn to make a shining on its dark surfaces. The words often would rush swiftly from hidden depths of consciousness and be fashioned by an art with which the working brain had but little to do.

In poetry he has always distinguished sharply between imagination and intellect : and if he began with the feeling that scrutiny was impious—if he felt that, for a time, his own certainty was more important to him than any outside consideration—there can be no doubt (see the opening of Section IV) that he is now fully aware of the danger. It is a real danger, and the phrase he uses elsewhere, " The seer of dreams is unconscious of creation," applies only too fully in another sense besides that in which he uses it. Certain though we may be that it expresses an idea external to our waking consciousness, we can never know to what extent a vision is our own creation : for which reason all dreams and visions are best judged after the scriptural maxim " By their fruits ye shall know them."

In the book now before us AE is no longer concerned with form.

> I have already in *The Candle of Vision* tried to illuminate that nature normally invisible to us. But I was there intent on images which had form, because it is easier to reason over things which have shape and body than about bodiless things. Intuition, feeling, thought are too swift in their coming and going, too elusive for a decisive argument over their nature. Though they may shake us by what they import, though what they in an instant hint at may be sacred to us, their coming and going are too swift for precise thought about themselves.

It is with these swifter intuitions, with the thing that is behind the vision, that he is now concerned. The poem, as he now sees it, is an organised form of thought, born and developed from the dominant mood in the psyche. It has its fountain in that inner, transcendental being which wakes in dream or day-dream, and whispers its oracle to the outer mind. This oracle the outer mind, once conscious of it, shapes into the poem. AE's problem, roughly stated, is to determine the respective shares in this of the outer and inner mind. He offers as illustrations many poems of his own, telling us the psychic circumstances of their birth and making. On the personal, though not on the essential, side his explanation leaves him in some doubt.

> In my age . . . I think I shape poetry more out of my experience of life . . . I do not know whether I am still receiving oracles out of the psyche, or whether I am not like that sad singer lost in the Caves of Lilith, playing with symbols left in a temple from which the divinity had departed, where the ancient ritual is still sung but in the absence of the indwelling god.

There is strong evidence in several of his later poems that the god still speaks.

L. A. G. STRONG

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SENSIBILITY, COMMON SENSE, SENSATION

Across New Guinea from the Fly to the Sepik. By IVAN CHAMPION. Constable. 15s.

Cape to Cowley *via* Cairo. By M. L. BELCHER. Methuen. 8s. 6d.

Black Frontiers. By SAM KEMP. Harrap. 8s. 6d.

The *hic leones sunt* which used to sprawl across the old charts more and more gives place to tame nomenclature. Innermost Asia and the farthest Ind have been mapped. This account of Karius's expedition through New Guinea—to trace the Fly to its source, cross to the head of the Sepik, which was to be followed to its outlet, and thus traverse the island at its widest point—forms no mean page in the annals of exploration. It is so quietly related, almost log-like in fashion, that the greatness and peril of the undertaking might be underestimated. There were slender resources, no maps, doubtful natives, rapids to face, wrecked canoes. Five hundred miles were negotiated on rafts. The country, often a maze of swamp and jungle, was difficult, transport supremely so. Most of the food had to be carried. Insects, not so much the mosquito as a tiny stingless bee, made times of hunger and thirst still more unbearable. Add to this, the author was nearly drowned, and for some time a cripple. A tale well worth telling and reading for its own sake, the book is of importance ethnographically, on the life of the Papuan, his existence bound up with King Pig. These " savages " are the most democratic of peoples. Chiefs they have, generally ignored. Time is of no consequence. They are grievously perturbed if things are not done *comme il faut*. On the second—and successful—expedition across the island there was a shortage of garden produce to offer with the inevitable pig at Bolivip village. The chief here was quite a character and did everything in his power to assist Mr. Champion. He addressed the neighbouring tribe of Feramin to ensure Mr. Champion's safe conduct when he had to leave and, without another word, he was away, as though he had done nothing which called for thanks, in welcoming and succouring the stranger. Calderon's " Tahiti " comes to mind. The natives made him free of their homes. When one said " But the Peretani (the British) would do the same for a poor Tahitian," he hung his head. Mr. Champion has performed and has written a little modern Odyssey.

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Punch calls this a "delightful book" and refers to "its animation, wit, and scholarship," continuing: "Her sympathy with the depths and shoals of the medieval mind is refreshing; as is the tenderness and humour with which she copes with its practical foibles. Finally, the illustrations really illustrate."

HARRAP

be considered no more off the map than is motoring from Paris to Rome. This account makes light—as is the feminine way—of the hardships necessarily attendant on the pioneer. Unlike a good many pioneers, Miss Belcher has many "tips for the tenderfoots" who will doubtless venture after her. Perhaps it is the feminine instinct again—it is certainly practical—to know that living is cheap. Eggs are from a ha'penny to a penny. One pound per head a week would be somewhere near the mark. The good humour in the face of difficulties should in no wise detract from this achievement. The two friends began their journey—as many of their acquaintance deemed it so foolhardy, rightly on April 1st, 1930—in a four-seater, which had already twenty-five thousand miles to its credit. After ten-thousand miles of the worst roads imaginable, on standard equipment, they drove into Oxford six months later, at a cost of some ten to fifteen pounds per thousand miles. Miss Belcher makes it abundantly clear that no one will ever be likely to motor all the way. After Juba, the first port on the Nile, motoring is not a practical proposition till Egypt is reached, and no motor road is ever likely to be built through the Sudan. She has charmingly demonstrated and pictured what an enjoyable proposition such a tour might be. Snapshots in ink as well as photogravure abound, as of the Orange season in Northern Rhodesia. If Miss Belcher cannot resist the temptation to discourse on native law and custom, she is by no means the first who has tried to interpret those morals, compared with which, despite explanations, the decrees of the Medes and Persians would seem an open book.

Black Frontiers is of the old school of travels. For all that Kemp was a pioneer member of Cecil John Rhodes's Mounted Police, and case-hardened, he remains, in writing, a "roinek," a somewhat raw hand. Recapturing each thrill, he endeavours to communicate to his reader much more than a *frisson* of danger. At the age of seventeen he joined the gold rush. From Johannesburg he went on to Kimberley, so into Matabeleland and Mashonaland. There are locust swarms, crocodiles, elephant stampedes, bushmen, Arab slavers, an imbroglio of sensation. Here are lions, with a vengeance! "Good shots" may early have lorded it in Africa. In the penetration of New Guinea not a shot was fired.

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A LIFE OF EXCITEMENT

Merrily I Go to Hell: Reminiscences of a Clergyman's Daughter. By MARY CAMERON. Allen and Unwin. 10s.

This is a book as gay as its cover: which is, in this case, saying a great deal. For the first hundred pages it is possible only to exclaim at delighted intervals: What a nice person! How I wish I knew her! Then, perhaps, one begins to wish Miss Cameron would grow, not older, but wiser: would profit a little by her amazing experiences and hair-breadth escapes: one trembles each time she falls into her enemies' snares, and longs to be at the book's end and know her safe at last. She is a magnificent extravert, a gay and gallant adventuress: virtuous, witty, tenderhearted, honest and magnanimous, all that a clergy child should be, yet withal a rebel from birth, saucy, graceless, canny, calculating, a "go-getter" and a siren and a stony breaker of hearts. How she survived her childhood is a mystery which must perplex her as surely as it does her readers; she was one of twelve, and every incident she relates of her brothers and sisters makes it evident that Dr. Stopes deserves not only the O.M. but the V.C. also. Owing to efforts to deplete the nurseries of England, life in the Vicarage was pretty strenuous; the mildest game was "Minotaurs," for which the instructions read "bite till the blood runs" or "bite till your teeth meet" or "bite till you feel the bone," whilst other amusements such as Public Prosecutor or Wackadaisy were even more blood-thirsty. Their Nana's regime was a good thrashing and/or castor oil, on every occasion ("you are naughty for 2 reasons: either you are not well, and the castor oil will do you good, or you have a bad disposition, and the castor oil will serve you right"); their father taught them Greek at three and allowed infinite bullying: only school was worse than home, and how revolting both were is evident from poor Miss Cameron's wholehearted enjoyment of the war: stink, rats and ptomaine poisoning were a blessed relief after all she had endured. One must, perhaps, also consider the probability that Miss Cameron has a certain gift for romancing: her book reads with that conviction which is one of the properties of good fiction. The later chapters are chiefly concerned with men: mostly of a species best described as Homo Insipiens, but on p. 285 Mary meets her mate and her reminiscences discreetly end with the words "together we went out into the night." A strong argument in favour of the celibacy of the clergy, this book—and yet—how fascinating Mary Cameron must be!

THE PLANTAGENETS

Men and Women of Plantagenet England. By DOROTHY MARGARET STUART. Harrap. 5s.

In the old popular books of a previous generation, which some of us can remember from childhood, mediæval life used to be made very vague for us. We did not grumble because what these books lacked in precision was, of course, made up in general picturesque effect. Some people may even resent a change. They may resent being told, as Miss Stuart is obliged to tell them, that the knight-errant entered for a joust or tournament "as unheroically as does a competitor in a golf or tennis tournament to-day." The expert is always liable to be thought a busybody. There are already too many facts in life, as the lady protested. Still, the day has long gone by for books about the Middle Ages in which a commendable degree of accuracy was assured regarding the time and use of the long bow, but in which actual details about chivalry and land tenure were left in a convenient haze. The truth is that the old popular writers did wonders, but compared with those of modern times they were under a disadvantage as regards their material.

The very title and purpose of Miss Stuart's book are significant of this being an age given over to periods and historical experts. Her book is not primarily intended for the scholar (although he will probably learn something from it), nor is it a mere journalistic "write-up" from other books. It does what it sets out to do, namely, to bring nearer to the general reader work accomplished by antiquarians and other specialists which, when all is said and done, has not yet been of much benefit to him. The researches of some expert on armour still mean very little to the motorist whose eyes encounter a brass in the country church he visits while his car is being repaired. With books like this at his disposal he no longer has any excuse. His case is aptly stated by Miss Stuart:

> The essential point, the detail which gives a sudden sense of contact with the past, may be buried in some ponderous antiquarian

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tome, or embedded in some dusty old inventory; it may lurk in a church-warden's entry or lie obliterated upon a monumental brass. How, then, can the student or the general reader who is attracted by the colour, comedy and human interest of the Middle Ages, but repelled by grey and arid summaries, step back into the dominions of the Plantagenet kings and get into touch with some of their subjects and citizens? This book represents an attempt to answer that question.

In her previous books Miss Stuart has already done excellent service in bringing otherwise inaccessible knowledge to our very doors. The scope of the present book, however, is more comprehensive than that hitherto attempted. Here life in England from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries is portrayed in a great many of its aspects. Beginning with the knight and squire we go on to chapters in which there are descriptions of how all manner of people lived and died, how they dressed and what trades they followed. Especially valuable are her up-to-date and well-documented chapters on rural workers and merchants and merchandise.

Chaucer and Langland are never very far from the page, but less stereotyped sources are also used. In dealing with medieval physicians, for example, it is agreeable to find references to Bernard of Gordon and John of Gaddesden with his early red-ray treatment of small pox. Again, among the churchmen we note an account of Grosseteste, who seems to have missed his rightful place in popular estimation. Interesting chapters are also given which deal with the miracle-plays and poetry of her period, and throughout the book is illustrated with well-chosen reproductions, many of them being from the lovely Luttrell Psalter.

Readers of Miss Stuart's book, whether they be general or those who have had some experience in the treatment of historical sources, will be impressed not only by her selection of authorities, but by her adroit use of them. To have digested and compressed an immense amount of information on so many topics commands respect, but the value of her book is in its presentation of these facts in an easily readable form. The result is a fascinating book from which everybody can learn something.

H. G.

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SHORTER NOTICES

Unemployment as a World Problem. By J. M. KEYNES. K. PRIBRAM, and E. J. PHELAN. Cambridge University Press, 16s.

We have here a collection of lectures delivered in the United States by two leading economists of England and Germany, and by a third associated with the International Labour Organisation. Of these three authors, Mr. Phelan does not succeed in saying much that is new, but contents himself with a selection of already recorded facts and opinions mainly drawn from the proceedings of the I.L.O. Professor Pribram gives an interesting account of the condition and causes of unemployment in Germany, as compared with other countries, and a somewhat discouraging analysis of plans and methods for its prevention or relief. By far the greatest interest, however, attaches to Mr. Keynes's three lectures, in which he attempts heroically and on the whole with success to simplify and compress the essential theses of his very difficult and technical *Treatise on Money*. We have here even, in words instead of symbols, Mr. Keynes's famous fundamental equation, which he regards as the key to the unemployment problem. His thesis is that, if the amount of new investment falls below the amount of current saving, employers are bound to be involved in business losses through a failure of demand for their products. The maintenance of a sufficient volume of new capital investment is thus regarded as the key to economic prosperity, because it ensures the maintenance of profits at a rate adequate to secure continued production. In addition to stating this thesis in quite astonishingly simple language, after the obscurities of the *Treatise*, Mr. Keynes gives an excellent brief analysis of the American boom and slump. It would be very useful if his lectures could be made available separately from the rest of the volume as a pamphlet. They would help most people a great deal towards the understanding of his more formidable writings.

Four Days: August 28th—31st, 1914. By G. SPENSER PRYSE. Lane. 7s. 6d.

Days of disorientation and confusion, it is true; but Mr. Spenser Pryse's narrative of his experiences in Northern France, during the week after the retreat from Mons began, is at once too vague and too detailed to make satisfying reading. Too vague, because one cannot make out from his account either the object or the objective of his "official mission." Where exactly was he bound for, that he must thread his way right through the heart of the oncoming confusion of the retreating armies? And too detailed, because one cannot help getting the impression that he is "writing up" his experiences and encounters. It may be the fault of a rather laboured and cliché-ridden style, but too many of the episodes don't ring true. There is, for instance, that dinner with a village priest who is shown reading Henri Poincaré on sidereal space, fingering an "*édition de luxe* of Montaigne," and "uncorking a fresh bottle of Château Iquem" (*sic!*), with the doctor discoursing in this vein:

> It would be as idle to argue that the Franks or the Goths possessed a higher degree of culture than the Latin, Celtic, and Iberian populations they displaced as that the hordes of Charles Martel were in the same state of enlightenment as the Islamic founders of Cordova. Nor was that the beginning. . . .

—and so on, through three pages. No: all kinds of things happen in such times as Mr. Spenser Pryse is describing; but they don't happen just like this.

Up at a Villa—Down in the City. By NESTA DE ROBECK. Dent. 7s. 6d.

It is the best praise of this delightful little book to say that it lives up to its title, for Miss de Robeck's Italy is the Italy the Brownings loved and celebrated, and in her description of the land and its people there is a sympathetic intimacy graced by a peculiarly attractive literary style. There is a particular charm in all Miss de Robeck's references, and they are many, to the religion of the Italian peasant, with its Catholicism deeply mingled with age-long paganism. We see the country as Miss de Robeck knows it, and the people at work and play and worship, friendly and cheerful, with poverty always for neighbour, as attractive a picture of human nature as anyone could desire. Other delightful passages are those dealing with Venetian cinquecento music, and with the Procession of the Gesu Morto.

Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border. Edited by Sir Walter Scott; revised edition by T. F. HENDERSON. Oliver and Boyd. 4 vols. 30s. the set.

It has been noticed that Scott the novelist owes much to Scott the poet, but the one true forerunner of both is the insatiable and indefatigable collector of ballads: this antiquarianism was one of the most enduring passions of his life. The *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* appeared in 1802, the fruit of much research; in 1833 Lockhart brought out an edition in which he added a certain number of notes; several abridgements and modifications came out in the reign of Queen Victoria; then in 1902 the late *and* lamented T. F. Henderson produced the first really critical edition since Lockhart's—a very much better edition than Lockhart's. Not only in the preface but in the notes, Mr. Henderson showed an up-to-date and thorough knowledge of ballad research; the editing is masterly and pleasing, the preface admirable. We can now see clearly to what extent Scott doctored the ballads. Scott,

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however, in his rôle of enlightened pioneer, cared little about textual accuracy, much about public interest in the ballad; and he did much excellent work in the special introductions and the notes.—The Border Minstrelsy should gain fresh popularity in the very cheap and handsome centenary reprint.

About Motoring

RACING IN AUTOMOBILES

SAVE that the title may possibly mislead, Mr. S. C. H. Davis's *Motor Racing* (Iliffe, 7s. 6d.) is an admirable book. It is not a history of motor racing, nor a guide to that exciting and dangerous sport, but a partial autobiography of its author. His experiences as a racing expert deserve to be told, for he took part in most of the events in which British cars contested from 1921 until 1931, when he was crippled after a skid at high speed on wet concrete at Brooklands. He was never given the wheel of a world's record-breaker, such as Segrave and Don and Campbell had the chance to handle; but he achieved most of the lesser distinctions in the speed world. His golden hour came at Le Mans in 1927 when five cars were piled up in a heap of wreckage on the far side of White House Corner, and he and Dr. Benjafield contrived to finish the course and win the race with their battered Bentley. This amazing victory was celebrated by a famous dinner at the Savoy, when the chairman announced that he had invited a solitary lady to be present. The doors of the hall were flung open, and in roared the Bentley with her crumpled wings and her one surviving headlamp blazing. Mr. Davis was bitten by the speed microbe during his school days at Westminster, and served as an apprentice at the Daimler works. Drifting into technical journalism, he joined the staff of the *Autocar*, and was presently appointed to carry out road tests of new models for that journal. In this task he graduated as a past-master in the handling of all kinds of cars, slow, fast, good, bad, and indifferent. In 1921 the Junior Car Club organised a 200 miles race at Brooklands for cars with engines not exceeding 1½ litres capacity, and Davis was asked to drive an A.C. He displayed qualities which led to a succession of offers in the years which followed; and until the serious accident which terminated his active speed career, he never lacked chances to race in the intervals of his professional duties. Being intimate with all the kings of speed, he was behind the scenes even when he was not driving; and his training as a journalist qualifies him to make the most of his stories. No one interested in car-driving and racing will put the book down until the last page is reached; and it is written as a tale of adventure and of companionship with men whom schoolboys keen on sport think of as heroes. Technical details appear only incidentally. There is hardly any discussion of the part which racing plays in the evolution of the motor car, and financial aspects are entirely excluded. The speed kings are presented to the reader as a gang of brothers, modest, humorous resolute, and daring. Mr. Davis, however, incidentally makes points which would never have occurred to the casual spectator at a motor race. He depicts motor racing as no less a tactical business than a small battle; the fast car is sent out to break up formidable opponents, whilst mathematicians with slide rules and charts maintain precise touch with the running of all the cars, and the commander-in-chief signals orders to the drivers as the kaleidoscope shuffles the order of the protagonists. With these precise tactics there goes an iron discipline. The unpardonable crime is to disobey the brain at the pits. Discipline is the first essential of success; and the lonely driver stands no chance against the trio who drive as a team. Not less important is organisation. When a car can cover a mile in thirty seconds, races are easily won or lost by the efficiency of the work at the pits where tyres are changed and tanks are filled. Consequently, pit work is vital to success. The design of a filler cap or funnel, the handling of a wheel jack, the provision for pouring petrol and oil into tanks, and the control of the men who tackle these jobs are at least as important as the possession of the best engine in a race, or the engagement of the most skilful driver.

In an epilogue Mr. Davis approaches the psychology of the sport, which appeals to him as the modern chivalry. It is one of the few outlets in the modern world for the spirit of adventure, giving a man a chance to test his personal mettle against his fellows, full of occasions for small courtesy towards rivals, and dominated by risks which in spite of their frightfulness may be preferable to rusting out in old age after long years of physical prudence.

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"I am the only Minister, however, who voted with the majority on each of the issues raised."

"What was the attitude of other Ministers?" asked the King.

The Prime Minister consulted his notes.

"The Minister for War," he said, "on eight occasions voted with the minority. The Lord Chancellor on seven occasions. The Postmaster General and the Minister for Air on five occasions each. The Home Secretary, the Governor of the Bank, and the Clerk of the Weather on three occasions each. And every other member of the Cabinet on one occasion only."

"Odd," said the King.

"I can tell your Majesty something still odder," said the Prime Minister. "On each contentious issue every member of the Cabinet voted; the majority was not the same on any two issues: and we achieved every possible distribution of votes, as between the majority and the minority."

How many Ministers are there in the Ruritanian Cabinet?

SLOCOMBE'S BANK

The solution, with Caliban's report on the first week's entries, will be printed next week.

Competitors for the Quarterly Prize are reminded that solutions (on foolscap, and with names and addresses clearly shown) must reach this office, addressed to *Caliban*, not later than midday on the following Thursday. Consideration, however, will be given to competitors residing abroad; every effort will be made to enable them to participate.

COLONEL BLOTTO

In view of the diversity of answers sent in, the full solution of this problem seems called for:

(1) The distribution of the enemy's forces is not known. It is therefore equally probable that any enemy unit is in any one of the four fortresses. Hence there are 4^3 or 64 possible enemy distributions:

In 4 of these the units are distributed	3	0	0	0
„ 36 „ „ „ „	2	1	0	0
„ 24 „ „ „ „	1	1	1	0

(2) Now, the Colonel has 5 possible distributions of his 4 units:

4	0	0	0
3	1	0	0
2	2	0	0
2	1	1	0
1	1	1	1

We have to consider the relative effectiveness of each in these, in respect of each possible enemy distribution.

(3) Take, for example, the distribution, 2 2 0 0:

	Total Points.
(i) Against the enemy distribution 3 0 0 0:	
Blotto will in 2 cases *lose* 2 points	− 4
„ „ 2 cases gain 1 point	+ 2
(ii) Against the distribution 2 1 0 0:	
Blotto will in 6 cases gain 2 points	+12
„ „ 12 „ 1 point	+12
„ „ 18 cases neither gain nor lose	—
(iii) Against the distribution 1 1 1 0:	
Blotto will in 18 cases gain 3 points	+54
„ „ 6 „ 1 point	+ 6
Total gain	+82

Hence in this case Blotto's expectation is $\frac{82}{64}$ points and the chance that he will be outpointed is $\frac{2}{64}$ or 31 to 1 against.

(4) Similar calculations will show that Blotto distributing his forces

2	1	1	0	will stand to gain	$\frac{55}{64}$ points.
3	1	0	0	„ „ „	$\frac{41}{64}$ „
1	1	1	1	„ „ „	$\frac{28}{64}$ „
4	0	0	0	„ „ „	$\frac{1}{64}$ „

Hence the 2 2 0 0 distribution is on balance the most advantageous.

A number of solvers, while getting the *distribution* right (this is arrived at on almost any assumption), claim that the odds against Blotto's being outpointed are only 5:1. I can see no justification for this argument, which, I suppose, purports to assume that the three possible enemy distributions are equally likely. But, even if this assumption be regarded as tenable, the deduction seems to me wrong; for surely the distribution 2 1 0 0 is three times as likely as either of the other distributions. This assumption would, in fact, lead to the conclusion that the probability of Blotto's being outpointed is 9:1 against.

The only solution correct in all details came from W. J. Hodgetts. A number of others were partially correct.

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"Some few years ago I was visiting some elderly friends, together "with the lady I hoped to make my wife. During conversation "one evening the ladies were discussing the opposite sex, and the "younger one expressed rather a pointed dislike of tobacco (and "in consequence, I presumed, of those who smoked it). I was "therefore greatly delighted when the elder lady said:—

"My dear! let me give you just one little piece of "sound advice. That is, never to marry a man who "doesn't smoke!"

"This advice sounded good to me, but an even better piece followed, "for the lady's husband, himself a confirmed pipe-smoker added:—

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"We both made good use of this advice, and thus I gained doubly, "for in addition to the best of wives, I found the best of good "tobaccos and would sooner miss a meal than a pipe of 'Punch-"bowle.'"

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE SLUMP IN WALL STREET—" PROSPEROUS " ENGLAND—
THE DEFAULT OF CENTRAL EUROPE

THE best of being a prophet in financial journalism is that there is no need to quote the prophecies which do not succeed. Here is one that more or less did. " Everything points to a last downward plunge of the New York Stock Exchange. The cry will soon be heard that the slump will never end. The solvency of every big firm will become the subject of foul suspicion. . . . The market will be carried down to extreme panic levels just as it was carried to extreme boom levels in the summer of 1929. Thus will come the great opportunity for the courageous British investor to acquire America's best equity stocks at bargain prices." This is not from the *Sunday Express*, but from THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of June 6th, 1931. It was followed by a further warning of a like nature on September 6th, 1931. The year closed with the New York Stock Exchange in the throes of a bad break which ended on January 5th, 1932. After the usual recovery the market again sagged and recently gave the appearance of working up for another " shake-out." This week it has come. For three successive days the market broke new low ground. The following are the Dow Jones indices which give the story in tabloid form:

	1931.					1932.		
New York.	Jan 6.	Feb. 23.	June 2.	June 27.	Sept. 26.	Jan. 5.	Mar. 5.	Apr. 5.
30 Industrials ..	172.7	193.9	121.7	156.0	107.4	71.24	88.5	68.1
20 Rails	102.2	111.7	66.8	88.3	55.8	31.4	38.6	25.8

The failure of business to show any signs of spring recovery, the inefficacy of the open market operations of the Reserve Banks for the expansion of credit, the further weakness of commodity prices, the collapse of the Kreuger group, the threatened liquidation of the Insull-Middle West group of Utilities, all combined to throw the market into complete dejection. The proposal of the House of Representatives to put a ¼ per cent. tax on sales of stock was the last straw.

* * *

It will be seen from the Dow Jones indices that railroads in the last eight months have suffered worse than industrial stocks. This is not surprising seeing that many of the best systems even are not earning their bond interest charges. The passing of Common Stock dividends by Baltimore and Ohio, which had hitherto been regarded as a " safety-first " investment share, was a bad shock to the market last month, although the excuse was given that the Company had to do this in order to obtain help from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for a maturity of $35,000,000 in August. There has been an unseemly squabble among the directors of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation about the manner of helping the railroads. It is said that the Corporation will not grant loans for new construction or for repayment of short-term loans to banks and will only help the railroads to meet maturing funded debt to the extent of 50 per cent. This may explain why " Nickel Plate " 6 per cent. 1932 bonds have fallen to 61. At any moment one expects to hear of a reconstruction " racket " organised by Al Capone from his Penitentiary to divert loans from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to the criminally weak railroads. The position of the great industrial corporations is becoming as deplorable as that of the railroads. According to the National City Bank the net profits of 900 American companies in 1931 were 53 per cent. lower than in 1930 and 73 per cent. lower than in 1929. The average return on invested capital was 3.3 per cent. in 1931, 7.1 per cent. in 1930 and 13.4 per cent. in 1929. But how can industrial America, laid out on mass-production lines to meet a never-declining demand, expect to earn any profits at all in the world's greatest slump? Even the great U.S. Steel Corporation, operating at under 25 per cent. of capacity, must sooner or later pass its dividends.

* * *

By comparison, industry in Great Britain appears prosperous. The reports of 338 companies published in January and February this year, according to the *Economist* analyses, showed a decline in net profits, after payment of debenture interest, of only 14.87 per cent., as compared with the corresponding figures a year ago. Perhaps these returns were unduly weighted by the relatively good results of electric supply, gas and retail trading companies published in the first two months of the year, but the retardation of the fall in industrial profits shown by the *Economist* analyses of this year's reports is too striking to be ignored. The reports of the bigger industrial companies, it must be confessed, are a mixed affair. The 1931 profits of Rolls-Royce, thanks to its aero engines, were only 2 per cent. below the 1930 figures, while those of Morris Motors were down by 40 per cent, and Ford Motor trading profits by 60 per cent. Vickers, thanks to its varied business (including armaments) reported a decline in net profits of only 19 per cent., but Powell Duffryn no less than 56 per cent. Imperial Chemical Industries reported a reduction in visible earnings of 24 per cent., but made no allowance for a depreciation of £6.9 millions on marketable investments. What the real earnings of this vast holding company may be cannot be guessed, because it steadfastly refuses to publish a consolidated income account. On the whole, Great Britain may be regarded as the most prosperous country to-day in a bankrupt industrial world. We have avoided too much dependence on the big industrial combines laid out for mass-production. Our multitude of little trades and firms stands us in good stead when profits have to be earned on small turnovers.

* * *

" We have to hope," said Mr. J. M. Keynes in his Halley Stewart lecture two months ago, " that the financial crisis will wear itself out before a point of catastrophe and general default has been reached." I expressed less optimism than Mr. Keynes at that time and I think it is fair to say that as far as Central Europe is concerned, the point of general default has now arrived. The Financial Committee of the League of Nations, in its recent report, described the financial situation in Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Greece as very serious, and urged immediate measures to relieve Greece and Austria. All it proposed was an immediate loan of £2,857,000 for Austria, the suspension of sinking fund payments on the Greek external debt, and a moratorium on 50 per cent. of its external debt interest for six months for Bulgaria. The Committee is apparently alarmed " at the extreme gravity of a rupture of contractual obligations." This is absurd. Everyone knows that the basis of the contractual obligations between debtor and creditor has long been entirely upset by the fall in commodity prices. It would seem far better to recognise the inability of these debtor countries to pay and to grant them an extended moratorium, provided they allowed their exchanges to find their natural level and removed all exchange restrictions. In this way, international trade may begin to flow again. The gold fetish and the loan contract fetish are holding up recovery. The French plan for bolstering up the position of the Danubian States by forming a Confederacy which shall enjoy a mockery of free trade and a minimum of fresh money, does not go to the roots of the problem. By postponing the Lausanne Conference, that is, by postponing a real solution of the Reparations burden, we have merely allowed so many months in which Central Europe can go bankrupt.

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ST. MARTIN'S.	PRECIOUS BANE.	Tu., W., F.
SAVOY.	OLD MAN MURPHY.	Thurs., Sat.
STRAND.	IT'S A GIRL.	Wed., Thurs.
WESTMINSTER.	TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL.	Wed., Sat.
WYNDHAM'S.	THE GREEN PACK.	Wed., Sat.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.—Sunday, April 10th, at 11 a.m.
JOHN A. HOBSON, M.A.
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FOUR Lectures on GREAT ENGLISH DOCTORS AND THEIR MESSAGE, illustrated with lantern slides, will be delivered by Sir George Newman, K.C.B., M.D., D.C.L., on the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th April, 1932, at Gresham College, Basinghall Street, E.C.2, at 6 o'clock. Admission free.

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COMPANY MEETING.

VICKERS LIMITED.

FINANCIAL STRENGTH SATISFACTORY.

The Annual General Meeting of Vickers, Limited, was held in London on April 4th, General the Hon. Sir Herbert A. Lawrence, G.C.B. (the Chairman), presiding.

The Chairman, in the course of his speech, said: The general world-trade depression and the reduction in Armaments under the influence of public opinion have affected adversely your Company's trading results. The net profit is £574,493, a reduction of £201,433 compared with 1930—and allows the payment of a dividend of 5 per cent. on the Ordinary Share Capital, although no transfer to Reserve Fund is possible on this occasion.

With regard to Vickers-Armstrongs, during the past year the concentration of the Company's products in the most efficient and best situated works has been completed. Erith has been permanently closed, and the Company's works and shipyards are now concentrated at Barrow, Elswick, Walker-on-Tyne, Crayford, and Dartford.

Your Directors have devoted much anxious thought to the position of the English Steel Corporation and, after consultation, it was decided to reduce the capital of the Company by writing off the losses and to modernise the works at Sheffield in order to secure greater efficiency and economy in production.

Vickers (Aviation), Ltd., which is entirely controlled by Vickers, Limited, acquired in 1929 the whole of the share capital of the Supermarine Aviation Works, Ltd., and the financial return from this Aviation group has again proved satisfactory.

Of the smaller undertakings practically all have felt the trade depression and show reduced profits in consequence.

International finance and international trade are interdependent—any factor which disturbs the free operation of the one reacts prejudicially on the other—and the sterilisation of the world's gold supply has precipitated the monetary upheaval which the payment of war debts and reparations first caused, and has led to a further development of that policy of economic nationalism which in aiming at domestic independence is destroying world progress and prosperity.

With regard to the future prospects of your Company, without some general revival of trade, and particularly more orders for armaments and shipbuilding, the immediate outlook is not encouraging. Administrative expenditure has been reduced in every direction, and an all-round reduction in salaries has been made, but unless the volume of orders required to keep our works occupied is available, it is impossible for the trading results to be satisfactory.

The most encouraging feature is that the financial position of your Company continues on a sound basis, its liquid resources having been conserved so that they may be profitably employed when a period of trade prosperity returns. The report was adopted.

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ISSUE is now joined, on paper at least, between the Irish Free State and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. The controversy over the Oath is, no doubt, very serious; but it has large elements of the ridiculous in it. Mr. De Valera declares that the Oath is an "intolerable burden to the people of the Free State." Well, well! And all it consists in is members of the Dail signing their names in a book! Mr. Thomas stands fast on the Treaty Settlement—an admirable position, but unfortunately ineffective from the point of view of defeating Mr. De Valera, since there do not appear to be any sanctions that can be applied by H.M. Government in the United Kingdom. If the Free State is determined to secede from the British Commonwealth, nothing short of war will prevent it—and war is unthinkable. But we are not sure the Free State does want to secede; Mr. De Valera himself seems desirous of having it both ways. Perhaps the remonstrances and admonitions of the other Dominions will persuade him after all to tolerate the "intolerable burden."

* * *

The German Government has dealt a swift and heavy blow at the Nazis. The decree ordering the disbandment of Hitler's private army was signed on Wednesday night, and within a few hours the police were raiding the "Brown" headquarters and "Storm-troop" barracks all over the country. This step had been under contemplation for some time, and many people thought it had been far too long deferred; but few expected it to be taken so dramatically on the morrow of President von Hindenburg's re-election. We can only as yet guess at its results. It may not be easy to stamp out this great military organisation of 400,000 men; but presumably the Government feels reasonably safe in taking the risk of resistance. From a political point of view, it may not do Hitler much harm; indeed, it may improve his chances in the coming elections, for whilst one side will acclaim it as a sign of strength on the part of Dr. Brüning, the other can interpret it as weakness.

* * *

Sir Samuel Hoare told us a few weeks ago that there was no censorship in India for "responsible foreign correspondents." Quite. But less favoured people are evidently in a very different case. A document circulated by the Political Department of the Government of Bengal to the Hindu press has come into our hands, and the following extracts are illuminating. After a reminder that the publication